

Cyberattack on U.S. pipeline is linked to criminal gang

By MAE ANDERSON AND
FRANK BAJAK
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The cyberextortion attempt that has forced the shutdown of a vital U.S. pipeline was carried out by a criminal gang known as DarkSide that cultivates a Robin Hood image of stealing from corporations and giving a cut to charity, a person close to the investigation said Sunday.

The shutdown, meanwhile, stretched into its third day, with the Biden administration saying an "all-hands-on-deck" effort is underway to restore operations and avoid disruptions in the fuel supply.

Experts said that gasoline prices are unlikely to be affected if the pipeline is back to normal in the next

few days but that the incident — the worst cyberattack to date on critical U.S. infrastructure — should serve as a wake-up call to companies about the vulnerabilities they face.

The pipeline, operated by Georgia-based Colonial Pipeline, carries gasoline and other fuel from Texas to the Northeast. It delivers roughly 45% of fuel consumed on the East Coast, according to the company. It was hit by what Colonial called a ransomware attack, in which hackers typically lock up computer systems by encrypting data and then demand a large ransom to release it. The company has not said what was demanded or who made the demand.



In this Sept. 8, 2008 file photo traffic on I-95 passes oil storage tanks owned by the Colonial Pipeline Company in Linden, N.J.

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Associated Press

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Continued from Front

However, the person close to the investigation, speaking on condition of anonymity, identified the culprit as DarkSide. It is among ransomware gangs that have "professionalized" a criminal industry that has cost Western nations tens of billions of dollars in losses in the past three years. DarkSide claims that it does not attack medical, educational or government targets — only large corporations — and that it donates a portion of its take to charity. It has been active since August and, typical of the most potent ransomware gangs, is known to avoid targeting organizations in former Soviet bloc nations. Colonial did not say whether it has paid or was negotiating a ransom, and DarkSide neither announced the attack on its dark web site nor responded to an Associated Press reporter's queries. The lack of acknowledgment usually indicates a victim is either negotiating or has paid. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said Sunday



In this Sept. 20, 2016 file photo vehicles are seen near Colonial Pipeline in Helena, Ala. Associated Press

that ransomware attacks are "what businesses now have to worry about," and that she will work "very vigorously" with the Homeland Security Department to address the problem, calling it a top priority for the administration. "Unfortunately, these sorts of attacks are becoming more frequent," she said

on CBS' "Face the Nation." "We have to work in partnership with business to secure networks to defend ourselves against these attacks." She said President Joe Biden was briefed on the attack. "It's an all-hands-on-deck effort right now," Raimondo said. "And we are working

closely with the company, state and local officials to make sure that they get back up to normal operations as quickly as possible and there aren't disruptions in supply." The person close to the Colonial investigation said that the attackers also stole data from the company, presumably for extortion purposes. Sometimes stolen data is more valuable to ransomware criminals than the leverage they gain by crippling a network, because some victims are loath to see sensitive information of theirs dumped online. Security experts said the attack should be a warning for operators of critical infrastructure — including electrical and water utilities and energy and transportation companies — that not investing in updating their security puts them at risk of catastrophe. Ed Amoroso, CEO of TAG Cyber, said Colonial was lucky its attacker was at least ostensibly motivated only by profit, not geopolitics. State-backed hackers bent on more serious destruction use the same intrusion methods as ransomware gangs. "For companies vulnerable to ransomware, it's a bad sign because they are probably more vulnerable to more serious attacks," he said. Russian cyberwarriors,

for example, crippled the electrical grid in Ukraine during the winters of 2015 and 2016. Cyberextortion attempts in the U.S. have become a death-by-a-thousands-cuts phenomenon in the past year, with attacks on hospitals forcing delays in cancer treatment, interrupting schooling and paralyzing police and city governments. Tulsa, Oklahoma, this week became the 32nd state or local government in the U.S. to come under ransomware attack, said Brett Callow, a threat analyst with the cybersecurity firm Emsisoft. Average ransoms paid in the U.S. jumped nearly threefold to more than \$310,000 last year. The average downtime for victims of ransomware attacks is 21 days, according to the firm Coveware, which helps victims respond. David Kennedy, founder and senior principal security consultant at TrustedSec, said that once a ransomware attack is discovered, companies have little recourse but to completely rebuild their infrastructure, or pay the ransom. "Ransomware is absolutely out of control and one of the biggest threats we face as a nation," Kennedy said. "The problem we face is most companies are grossly underprepared to face these threats." Colonial transports gasoline, diesel, jet fuel and home heating oil from refineries on the Gulf Coast through pipelines running from Texas to New Jersey. Its pipeline system spans more than 5,500 miles, transporting more than 100 million gallons a day. Debnil Chowdhury at the research firm IHSMarkit said that if the outage stretches to one to three weeks, gas prices could begin to rise. "I wouldn't be surprised, if this ends up being an outage of that magnitude, if we see 15- to 20-cent rise in gas prices over next week or two," he said. The Justice Department has a new task force dedicated to countering ransomware attacks. □

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House GOP leader says he backs ousting Cheney from No. 3 job

By HOPE YEN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top House Republican Kevin McCarthy on Sunday publicly endorsed Rep. Elise Stefanik for the post of No. 3 leader, cementing party support of the Donald Trump loyalist over Rep. Liz Cheney, an outspoken critic of the former president for promoting discredited claims that the 2020 election was stolen.

House Republicans could vote as early as Wednesday to remove Cheney, the highest-ranking woman in the Republican leadership and daughter of former Vice President Dick Cheney, and replace her with Stefanik, whose ascension has received Trump's backing.

Asked in an interview on Fox News Channel's "Sunday Morning Futures" whether he supported Stefanik, R-N.Y., for the job of Republican Conference chair, McCarthy responded: "Yes, I do."

"We want to be united in moving forward, and I think that is what will take place," he said in response to a question about whether he had the votes to oust Cheney, R-Wyo.

McCarthy said the leadership post must focus on a



In this April 22, 2021, file photo, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy of Calif., speaks during his weekly press briefing on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

message "day in and day out" on what he said were the problems of the Biden administration.

Cheney has taken on Republicans, including McCarthy, R-Calif., saying those who indulge Trump's false claims of a stolen presidential election are "spreading THE BIG LIE, turning their back on the rule of law, and poisoning our democratic system." In an opinion essay Wednesday in The Washington Post, she

denounced the "dangerous and anti-democratic Trump cult of personality," and warned her fellow Republicans against embracing or ignoring his statements "for fundraising and political purposes."

She also said McCarthy had "changed his story" after initially saying Trump "bears responsibility" for the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol. McCarthy initially criticized Trump's actions, and in a private call during the

insurrection, had urged the then-president to call off the rioters. The GOP leader now says he does not believe Trump provoked the riot. McCarthy on Sunday denied that Republicans' effort to remove Cheney was based on her views of Trump or being one of 10 House Republicans to vote to impeach Trump over the Jan. 6 riot. He said she was distracting from Republicans' bid to win back the House in 2022 and suc-

cessfully oppose President Joe Biden's agenda, goals that McCarthy believes will need Trump's support.

McCarthy complained last week that he had "lost confidence" in Cheney and "had it with her" over her continuing remarks about Trump, according to a leaked recording of his exchange on "Fox and Friends."

Cheney actually has a more conservative voting record in the House than Stefanik, a onetime Trump critic who evolved into an ardent ally. She previously opposed Trump's tax cuts.

"You have this real battle right now in the party, this idea of let's just put our differences aside and be unified," said Rep. Adam Kinzinger, R-Ill., who also voted to impeach Trump. "They're going to get rid of Liz Cheney because they'd much rather pretend that the conspiracy is either real or not confront it than to actually confront it and maybe have to take the temporary licks to save this party and in the long term this country," he said on CBS' "Face the Nation."

The second-ranking House Republican leader, Rep. Steve Scalise of Louisiana, already has announced his support for Stefanik. □

Police: Maryland man killed 3 neighbors, set house ablaze

WOODLAWN, Md. (AP) — A Maryland man who neighbors said had a long history of aggression went on a rampage over the weekend, shooting or stabbing three people to death and setting his home on fire before responding officers fatally shot him, police said Sunday.

A news release from the Baltimore County Police Department identified the victims and offered the clearest picture so far of what the department said unfolded on a residential street in suburban Baltimore early Saturday morning.

According to police, a preliminary investigation indicates 56-year-old Everton Brown forced his way into a neighboring house, where he stabbed and shot Is-

mael Quintanilla, 41. As Sara Alacote, 37, ran from that home in an attempt to escape, Brown chased her outside, fatally shooting her several times, the news release said. When two neighbors emerged from their home, Brown shot them as well, according to police. At some point during the course of events, Brown also set fire to his residence, police said. The scene was a charred mess — a fire official said Saturday that the building where the fire started, as well as one adjacent to it, collapsed and a third dwelling was heavily damaged. Police received numerous calls reporting both the fire and an active shooter. Responding officers who were wearing body cameras encoun-

tered Brown in the parking lot, police said.

Four fired shots at him until they were able to take him into custody, according to the news release. He was taken to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead. Investigators later found several homemade explosive devices in one of Brown's two vehicles, police said. They also recovered a handgun and large knife. Police have not provided a motive or details about what preceded the attack. They said Sunday they were still conducting interviews and processing the scene.

Gail Watts, a longtime resident of the neighborhood who said she witnessed the attack unfolding, told The Associated Press on Satur-



The site of a fire in Woodlawn, Md., where three people were killed, including a suspect, and two others were injured on Saturday, May 8, 2021.

Associated Press

day that many in the neighborhood thought Brown was mentally ill. She said he was aggressive toward women and often accused neighbors of surveilling him.

Other neighbors who spoke with the Baltimore Sun, which had written about Brown in 2008, described similar threatening, erratic behavior. □

Tearful reunions mark second Mother's Day under pandemic

By **CLAUDIA LAUER, MICHELLE LIU and ED WHITE**
Associated Press

Last Mother's Day, they celebrated with bacon and eggs over FaceTime. This time, Jean Codianni of Los Angeles flew to New Jersey to surprise her 74-year-old mother, now that both have been vaccinated against the disease that has stolen uncountable hugs and kisses around the world.

"You forget how your mom smells, how she looks. It's like, she never looks as beautiful as the last time you saw her," Codianni said. "We understand how privileged we are, how lucky we are. Hundreds of thousands of people don't get to celebrate Mother's Day, or are celebrating it under a veil of grief."

Joyous reunions among vaccinated parents and children across the country marked this year's Mother's Day, the second one celebrated during the coronavirus pandemic. Some families separated by worries of transmitting the virus saw each other for the first time in more than a year, emboldened by their vaccinations, as many others grieved for mothers lost to the virus.

For Pam Grimes, Mother's Day last year remains a fuzzy yet "scary and de-



Signs about Mother's Day are displayed at a home decor department store in Northbrook, Ill., Saturday, May 8, 2021.

Associated Press

pressing" memory, blurred together with the rest of the pandemic's early months. In contrast, when her vaccinated adult grandchildren gathered at her Panama City, Florida, home to celebrate this year, they hugged and laughed and teased each other.

"The whole world felt better," Grimes said.

Historian Andy Verhoff didn't see his mother for Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Year's. But for Mother's Day, he drove from his home in Columbus, Ohio, to spend a day in rural Put-

nam County, Ohio with her, stopping at the first historical marker they'd worked on together. Both mother and son were vaccinated, giving them the confidence to take their masks off — which made it feel like a normal, pre-pandemic day, Verhoff said.

"We never let the mask get in the way of things," Verhoff said. "It was just nice to not have my glasses fog up."

Some long-term care facilities across the country prepared for the special day by facilitating in-person

visits, especially as some states have relaxed visitation rules in recent months given rising vaccination rates and dropping case numbers.

In suburban Detroit, residents with dementia at Addington Place lately have been allowed to see visitors in person. But the big change Sunday was their ability to leave for a special meal with family members and return without being quarantined. Moms were also receiving roses from staff.

"Residents can feel the

energy now that families are coming in," said Kelley Fulkerson, business office manager at Addington in Northville. "There is excitement among staff — and tears and excitement among families waiting to see loved ones."

St. Joseph of Harahan — an assisted living facility in Harahan, Louisiana — held a parking lot parade Friday with dozens of cars honking and family members yelling well wishes for Mother's Day.

Residents in masks sat behind caution tape and waved to loved ones whom they had waited to see for more than a year in some cases. Workers passed out balloons and flowers.

Cathedral Village, a nursing home and rehabilitation center in Philadelphia, was spacing out weekend visits for Mother's Day, said supervisor Hannah Han. Social workers were helping some families that wanted to take people home to celebrate. Visits in private rooms required masks and gowns.

Mary Daniel, who last year took a job as a dishwasher so she could see her husband at a long-term care facility in Jacksonville, Florida, said holidays are important to maintain traditions with family. She said spouses and others should

Good Samaritan recalls jumping from bridge to save girl, 2



This photo provided by the Ocean City Fire Department shows the wreckage from a car accident on the Route 90 bridge in Ocean City, Md., on Sunday, May 2, 2021.

Associated Press

OCEAN CITY, Md. (AP) — A Maryland man is being hailed as a hero for leaping off a bridge into a bay to save a 2-year-old girl who had been ejected from a wrecked vehicle into the waters below. Ocean City emergency responders met up Friday with Jonathan Bauer, who shared his story publicly for the first time since the crash May 2 that prompted him to leap from a height of at least 25 feet (7 meters) into the water, the Daily Times reported. Bauer was running errands with his 13-year-old daughter when five vehicles collided that Sunday not far from him on the Route 90 bridge over Assawoman Bay in Ocean

City. He said he saw one of the vehicles, a truck, left teetering on the bridge's guardrail. "First thing I remember hearing was the tire screech, and then the truck swaying back and forth like it was losing control," Bauer said. Bauer said he went and looked down to the water and saw a car seat and then — about 6 feet (2 meters) away — the little girl floating. He said he frantically looked to see if there were any boats nearby that could come to her aid. At first, he said, "I saw the little girl and she was on her back floating perfectly on her back, arms moving, legs kicking." Choking up, he added, "Then I looked over to the water and she

had flipped over onto her stomach and her face was in the water." He plunged in and rescued the girl, who was airlifted to a hospital in Baltimore, the report said. Police say the girl is expected to make a full recovery, adding seven others in the crash have since been treated at hospitals and released. Ocean City Fire Chief Richard Bowers called Bauer a "humble hero" for putting his own life on the line by plunging into the shallow water from high up. "What he did was without question a heroic thing, and very courageous thing to jump into over the railing, down 25 to 30 feet into open water," Bowers said. □

Death toll soars to 50 in school bombing in Afghan capital

By RAHIM FAIEZ

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)

— Grieving families buried their dead Sunday following a horrific bombing at a girls' school in the Afghan capital that killed 50 people, many of them pupils between 11 and 15 years old.

The number of wounded in Saturday's attack climbed to more than 100, said Interior Ministry spokesman Tariq Arian. In the western neighborhood of Dasht-e-Barchi, families buried their dead amid angry recriminations at a government they said has failed to protect them from repeated attacks in the mostly Shiite Muslim neighborhood.

"The government reacts after the incident, it doesn't do anything before the incident," said Mohammad Baqir, Alizada, 41, who had gathered to bury his niece, Latifa, a Grade 11 student the Syed Al-Shahda school. Three explosions outside the school entrance struck as students were leaving for the day, said Arian. The blasts targeted Afghanistan's ethnic Hazaras who dominate the Dasht-e-Barchi neighborhood, where the bombings occurred. Most Hazaras are Shiite Muslims. The Taliban denied responsibility, condemning the attack and the many deaths.

The first explosion came from a vehicle packed with explosives, followed by two others, said Arian, adding that the casualty figures could still rise.

In the capital rattled by relentless bombings, Saturday's attack was among the worst. Criticism has mounted over lack of security and growing fears of even more violence as the U.S. and NATO complete their final military withdrawal from Afghanistan.

At Vatican City, in his traditional Sunday remarks to faithful in St. Peter's Square, Pope Francis cited the bombing. "Let us pray for the victims of the terrorist attack in Kabul, an inhumane action that struck so many girls as they were coming out of school."



Afghan men bury a victim of deadly bombings on Saturday near a school, at a cemetery west of Kabul, Afghanistan, Sunday, May 9, 2021.

Associated Press

He said. The pontiff then added: "May God give Afghanistan peace."

The Dasht-e-Barchi area has been hit by several incidents of violence targeting minority Shiites and most often claimed by the Islamic State affiliate operating in the country. No one has yet claimed Saturday's bombings.

In this same neighborhood in 2018, a school bombing killed 34 people, mostly students. In September 2018 a wrestling club was attacked killing 24 people and in May 2020 a maternity hospital was brutally attacked killing 24 people, including pregnant women and infants. And in October 2020, the Kawsar-e-Danish tutoring center was attacked, killing 30 people. Most of the attacks were claimed by the Islamic State affiliate operating in Afghanistan.

The radical Sunni Muslim group has declared war on Afghanistan's Shiites. Washington blamed IS for a vicious attack last year in a maternity hospital in the same area that killed pregnant women and newborn babies.

Soon after the bombing, angry crowds attacked

ambulances and even beat health workers as they tried to evacuate the wounded, Health Ministry spokesman Ghulam Dastigar Nazari said. He had implored residents to cooperate and allow ambulances free access to the site.

Arian, the Interior Ministry spokesman, blamed the attack on the Taliban despite their denials.

Bloodied backpacks and schools books lay strewn outside the Syed Al-Shahda school. In the morning, boys attend classes in the sprawling school compound and in the afternoon, it's girls' turn.

On Sunday, Hazara leaders from Dasht-e-Barchi met to express their frustration with the government failure to protect ethnic Hazaras, deciding to cobble together a protection force of their own from among the Hazara community.

The force would be deployed outside schools, mosques and public facilities and would cooperate with government security forces. The intention is to supplement the local forces, said Parliamentarian Ghulam Hussein Naseri.

The meeting participants decided that "there is not

any other way, except for people themselves to provide their own security alongside of the security forces," said Naseri, who added that the government should provide local Hazaras with weapons.

Naseri said Hazaras have been attacked in their schools, in their mosques and "it is their right to be upset. How many more families lose their loved ones? How many more attacks against this minority has to occur in this part of the city before something is done?"

One of the students fleeing the school recalled the attack, the girls' screams of the girls, the blood.

"I was with my classmate, we were leaving the school, when suddenly an explosion happened," said 15-year-old Zahra, whose arm had been broken by a piece of shrapnel.

"Ten minutes later there was another explosion and just a couple of minutes later another explosion," she said. "Everyone was yelling and there was blood everywhere, and I couldn't see anything clearly." Her friend died.

Most of the dozens of injured brought to the EMER-

GENCY Hospital for war wounded in the Afghan capital, "almost all girls and young women between 12 and 20 years old," said Marco Puntin, the hospital's program coordinator in Afghanistan.

In a statement following the attack, the hospital, which has operated in Kabul since 2000, said the first three months of this year have seen a 21 per cent increase in war-wounded.

Even as IS has been degraded in Afghanistan, according to government and US officials, it has stepped-up its attacks particularly against Shiite Muslims and women workers. The attack comes days after the remaining 2,500 to 3,500 American troops officially began leaving the country. They will be out by Sept. 11 at the latest. The pullout comes amid a resurgent Taliban, who control or hold sway over half of Afghanistan.

The top U.S. military officer said Sunday that Afghan government forces face an uncertain future and possibly some "bad possible outcomes" against Taliban insurgents as the withdrawal accelerates in the coming weeks. □

U.S. Navy seizes weapons in Arabian Sea likely bound for Yemen

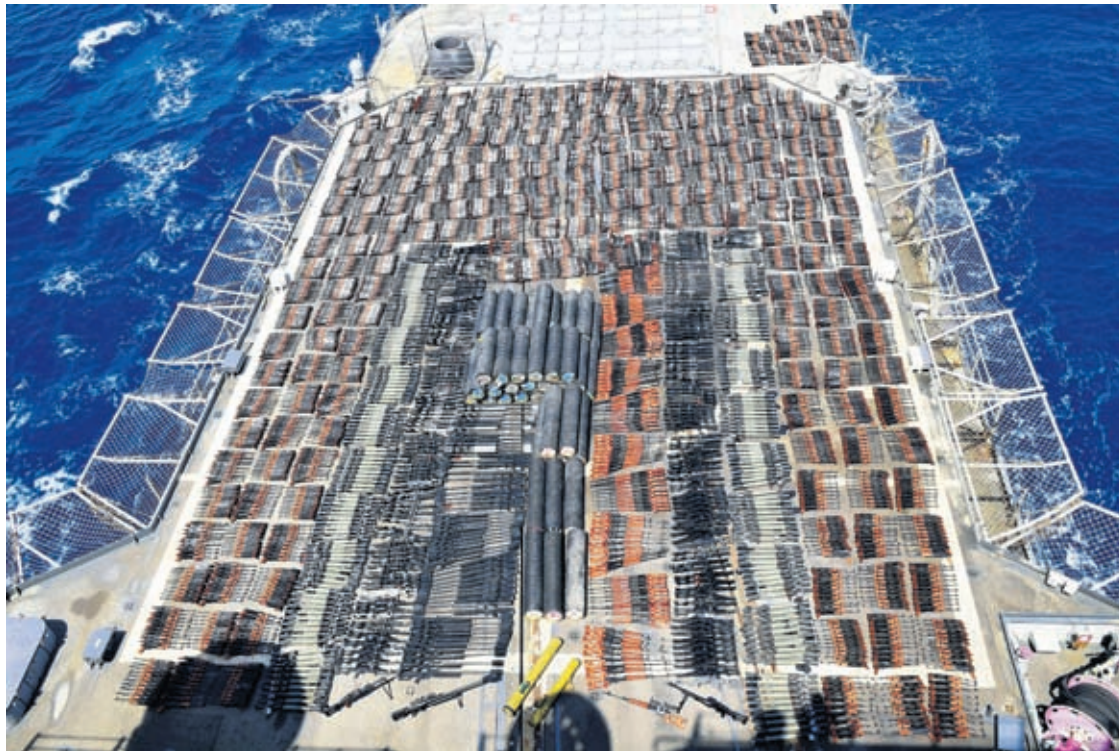
By JON GAMBRELL

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The U.S. Navy announced Sunday it seized an arms shipment of thousands of assault weapons, machine guns and sniper rifles hidden aboard a ship in the Arabian Sea, apparently bound for Yemen to support the country's Houthi rebels.

An American defense official told The Associated Press that the Navy's initial investigation found the vessel came from Iran, again tying the Islamic Republic to arming the Houthis despite a United Nations arms embargo. Iran's mission to the U.N. did not immediately respond to a request for comment, though Tehran has denied in the past giving the rebels weapons.

The seizure, one of several amid the yearslong war in Yemen, comes as the U.S. and others try to end a conflict that spawned one of the world's worst humanitarian disasters. The arms shipment, described as sizeable, shows that the war may still have far to run. The guided-missile cruiser USS Monterey discovered the weapons aboard what the Navy described as a stateless dhow, a traditional Mideast sailing ship, in an operation that began Thursday in the northern reaches of the Arabian Sea off Oman and Pakistan.



Weapons that the U.S. Navy described as coming from a hidden arms shipment aboard a stateless dhow are seen aboard the guided-missile cruiser USS Monterey on Saturday, May 8, 2021.

Associated Press

Sailors boarded the vessel and found the weapons, most wrapped in green plastic, below deck.

When laid out on the deck of the Monterey, the scale of the find came into focus. Sailors found nearly 3,000 Chinese Type 56 assault rifles, a variant of the Kalashnikov. They recovered hundreds of other heavy machine guns and sniper rifles, as well as dozens of advanced, Russian-made anti-tank guided missiles. The shipments also included several hundred rocket-propelled grenade launchers and optical sights for weapons.

The Navy's Mideast-based 5th Fleet did not identify where the weapons originated, nor where they were going. However, an American defense official said the weapons resembled those of other shipments interdicted bound for the Houthis. Based on interviews with the crew and material investigated on board, the sailors determined the vessel came from Iran, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the ongoing investigation.

"After all illicit cargo was removed, the dhow was assessed for seaworthiness,

and after questioning, its crew was provided food and water before being released," the 5th Fleet said in a statement.

The seizure marks just the latest in the Arabian Sea or Gulf of Aden involving weapons likely bound to Yemen. The seizures began in 2016 and have continued intermittently throughout the war, which has seen the Houthis fire ballistic missiles and use drones later linked to Iran. Yemen is awash with small arms that have been smuggled into poorly controlled ports over years of conflict.

This recent seizure ap-

peared to be among the biggest. Tim Michetti, an investigative researcher who studies the illicit weapon trade, also said the shipment bore similarities to the others. "The unique blend of materiel recovered by the USS Monterey appears to be consistent with the materiel from previous interdictions, which have been linked to Iran," he said.

Yemen's war began in September 2014, when the Houthis seized Sanaa and began a march south to try to seize the entire country. Saudi Arabia, along with the United Arab Emirates and other countries, entered the war alongside Yemen's internationally recognized government in March 2015. Iran backed the Houthis, who harass Saudi Arabia with missile fire and drone attacks.

The war has killed some 130,000 people, including over 13,000 civilians slain in targeted attacks, according to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Project. The war has seen atrocities from all sides. Saudi airstrikes using American-made bombs killed school children and civilians. The UAE paid off local al-Qaida fighters to avoid fighting and controlled prisons where torture and sexual abuse was rampant. The Houthis employ child soldiers and indiscriminately lay landmines. □

E.U. launches conference to debate its future with citizens

By SYLVIE CORBET

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday expressed hope that Europe would rediscover the path of "great projects, great ambitions and great dreams" as the European Union launched a wide consultation process meant to design the shape of the bloc's future.

Macron spoke as part of Europe Day, the inaugural event of the Conference on the Future of Europe in the French city of Strasbourg.

"What Europe do we want

in 10 years, 15 years from now?" Macron asked in his opening speech, calling on people to debate all major issues, from the bloc's borders to new institutions, cultural projects, education and the fight against climate change. The process also aims at bringing the EU's complex decision-making closer to its 450 million citizens.

He called on Europeans to get inspired by the United States to rediscover ways to "shape the future and move fast."

The pandemic has shown that the EU lacked the effective tools to react



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and French President Emmanuel Macron attend Europe Day ceremony and the Future of Europe conference at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, eastern France, Sunday, May 9, 2021.

Associated Press

quickly to a continent-wide emergency. The bloc was notably criticized at the beginning of the year for its vaccination campaign starting slower compared to the U.S. and the United Kingdom.

"The pandemic has been traumatic ... and like all trauma we need to find a way of talk about it if we want to move beyond it," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said. "And there's no better way to do that than by offering prospective, hope and the ability to change things for the better." □

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South Africa's royal scandal: New Zulu king's claim disputed

By **GERALD IMRAY**

Associated Press

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) — A new Zulu king was named in South Africa amid scenes of chaos after members of the royal family questioned Prince Misuzulu Zulu's claim to the title following his father's death, and bodyguards suddenly whisked him away from the public announcement at a palace.

The controversy over the next king, a largely ceremonial role but one with great significance for South Africa and its 12 million Zulu people, has arisen after the death in March of King Goodwill Zwelithini, who had reigned since 1968. Zwelithini apparently named one of his six wives,

Queen Mantfombi Shiyiwe Dlamini Zulu, as the "regent of the Zulu kingdom" in his will, but she died after holding the title for only a month, throwing the royal succession into turmoil.

The commotion broke out Friday night at the reading of Queen Mantfombi's will and hours after a memorial service for her. The queen's will named 46-year-old Prince Misuzulu, her eldest son with King Zwelithini, as the heir and next king.

But another prince objected and interrupted the announcement at the KwaKhangelamankengane Royal Palace in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province. Two princesses also have questioned

whether the late king's will gave Queen Mantfombi the right to nominate a successor upon her death. King Zwelithini reportedly had 28 children with his different wives, and Queen Mantfombi was not his first wife.

A dispute over succession had been brewing since the late king's death, fascinating many South Africans with their very own royal scandal. Significant to the dispute is the fate of the king's assets and the vast amounts of land traditionally owned by the Zulu people and now held in a trust. Estimates say the trust controls nearly 30% of the land in KwaZulu-Natal province, or around 28,000 square kilometers (10,810 square miles). The king is the sole trustee.



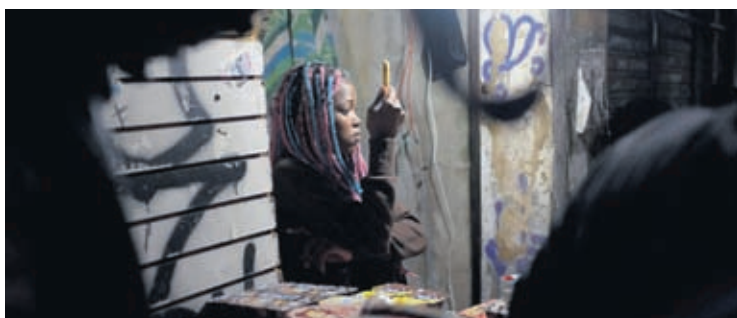
Prince Misuzulu Zulu, centre, flanked by fellow warriors in traditional dress at the KwaKhangelamankengane Royal Palace, during a ceremony, in Nongoma, Friday May 7, 2021.

Associated Press

Earlier on Friday, Prince Misuzulu, who wore a traditional leopard-skin headband reserved for royalty and chiefs, called for unity among the Zulu royals at his mother's memorial service.

"We have no doubt we will unite as a family," he said in a message read out by his younger sister, Princess Ntandoyesizwe Zulu. "Let us emulate the king by being peaceful." □

Top judges in Brazil want review after deadly police raid



A girl takes photos of a protest a day after a deadly police operation in the Jacarezinho favela of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Friday, May 7, 2021.

Associated Press

By **DÉBORA ÁLVARES**

Associated Press

BRASILIA, Brazil (AP) — Several justices from Brazil's Supreme Court say a ruling last year that banned police raids into Rio de Janeiro favelas, or slums, must now be reviewed after one of the city's deadliest police operations. Brazil's Supreme Court issued a ruling last year prohibiting police operations in Rio's favelas during the pandemic unless "absolutely exceptional." In a telephone interview with The Associ-

ated Press on Saturday, Supreme Court justice Marco Aurélio Mello said the May 6 raid should be investigated, but didn't say whether it violated the earlier ruling. Rather, he said that the court's ruling should have been reviewed as the pandemic persisted. "The decision stemmed from an assumption that the injunction would be temporary and there would be an obstacle for a few months," he said. "The state is the law. Trafficking really needs to be fought." □

STRAIGHT UP CONVERSATIONS
ABOUT EDUCATION

CHARISSE HOEN-DALY

DEBORAH VAN DEN BERG-ALEXANDER

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MedCare's Fit2Fly COVID-19 Testing Centers: Just introduced a game changer: Rapid PCR, minutes not hours to get your results.

PALM BEACH — MedCare's Fit2Fly COVID-19 Testing Center is your best option for the post vacation COVID-19 test which is now required by the U.S. before returning home. All passengers going to the United States, including U.S. citizens, are required to have a negative (antigen or PCR) COVID-19 test result of a test taken maximum three days prior to boarding the flight, or documentation of recovery from COVID-19. MedCare's testing centers in and close to the hotels provide you with an easy and secure solution.

MedCare Clinic, a high-quality medical clinic that is specialized in urgent care for tourists and that has been appointed as the national COVID-19 clinic for tourists, and Laboratorio di Servizio, a full-service modern medical laboratory with state-of-the-art equipment, have partnered up to provide fast and reliable COVID-19 testing to all. Laboratorio di Servizio is ISO-15189:2012 accredited by the Dutch Council for Accreditation (M317).

Rapid PCR

As Aruba resumes to receive more and more visitors each month, one thing has become very clear: testing is critical. Thus far Medcare Clinic has been offering high-volume laboratory testing with results in 24 hours or less. The newest service on the market is Rapid PCR, where you receive your results in minutes not hours.

Just steps away from you

The Fit2Fly COVID-19 Testing Centers are located at the Cove Mall and at the Courtyard Aruba Resort at the mill, two locations at a stone's throw from your resort, condominium, or other vacation accommodation.. Walk-ins are welcome. It is recommended that the tests are done timely, as the negative test is only accepted if taken up to three days before boarding your flight. MedCare Fit2Fly Testing Center at the Cove Mall is opposite the Holiday Inn and is open every day for walk-ins from 8am through 10pm. MedCare's other location is situated at The Courtyard Aruba Resort, is across the street from the RIU Hotel and is open every day from 8:30am until 12:30pm.

At your hotel

For a selection of hotels/resorts in Aruba, MedCare has setup Testing Centers on site. The hotels/resorts at which we have a testing site are: Divi All Inclusive, Divi Dutch Village, Divi Golf, Divi Phoenix, Divi Tamarijn, Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort, Hyatt Regency, Renaissance, and the Ritz-Carlton Resort. Please contact your front desk for more information on our Testing Centers at these properties.



Costs and timing

Passengers must be tested with a viral test that could be either an Antigen Test or a nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT), such as the reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (PCR). The price for the Antigen Test is only \$50, and the PCR Test is available, for \$125. The new rapid PCR will be \$150 (results in 30 minutes.) MedCare offers the easier and substantially cheaper Antigen Test that is acceptable for travel to the U.S. as per the CDC guidelines. Pre-travel testing is not covered by the Aruban visitor insurance. Please contact your insurance company to verify if testing costs are insured. Results are e-mailed to you within 24 hours of testing.

Private bookings

For your convenience, Medcare also offers private testing at your accommodation/hotel room for a one-time service fee of \$120. This fee covers testing up to 10 people (one appointment, at one location and a specific time). Additional persons will be charged \$10 per person. □

To book your test in advance, please contact:

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For more information on MedCare Testing Centers:

<https://medcare.aw/en/covid-19-testing>





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Papillon Restaurant presents: Chef's Garden, the butterfly effect of magnificent local food

PALM BEACH —A true once-in-a-lifetime experience is coming up. The stage: an Aruban cunucu house creating a magical ambiance. The play: The Secret Garden; a 6-course culinary voyage by a Michelin-trained chef from Belgium, Griet Vanbrabant. The content: local products from local farmers tuned into the most amazing dishes; leaving you in an enchanted state and giving you a memory that will last a lifetime. Be sure to reserve this opportunity before others do. This production is presented to you by Papillon Restaurant.

Sometimes combining the best of the best is a matter of all things falling into place. Every Wednesday of March, 2021, from 7p.m. to 10p.m. you are welcomed to enter a world where food is a passion. Papillon Restaurant presents their guest chef, Vanbrabant - who will be on the island for a limited time period - and with The Secret Garden menu being a fresh concept on the island, we're sure you will fall completely in love with this.

A bit about Griet

Vanbrabant is a passionate chef with over 15 years of experience in fine dining menu development, culinary staff management, food preparation and creative recipe design. She is educated in classic French Cuisine and Modern Gastronomy teachings throughout her



international career in Michelin star and the World's 50 Best restaurants such as El Bulli and Comerc 24 in Barcelona, Pujol in Mexico City, Rockpool in Australia. Let her entice you with her succulent, Aruban recipes like they've never tasted before.

The menu is carefully done with local products, fresh and perfectly matched with a selection of wines by local sommeliers. Diet options are available; please inform them when you make your reservation.

The Secret Garden & Papillon

This is an in-home dining experience where you will feel you are part of an exclusive setting. Private culinary events are the owner's specialty and their lush, tropical garden is also inviting for you to relax and indulge in hours of authentic culinary delights, a heaven to foodies. For more than a decade, Papillon restaurant has built a reputation with the fusion of classic French cuisine, Dutch and Caribbean flavors. They know how to thrill and in collaboration with The Secret Garden we can only expect phenomenal. □



For reservations:

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Papillon
RESTAURANT

A broad research on Aruba's health care quality brought forward another Doctor of Law on the island: Dr. Jayburt Dijkhoff argues check of health care quality is sufficient

ORANJESTAD — It is necessary to create a completely new system to assure that Aruba can comply with international agreements on the health care quality rights. That is the conclusion of Dr. Jayburt Dijkhoff, who was granted the title Doctor of Law, after defending his thesis in front of the university committee existing of members from University Utrecht and University Groningen (Professor Dr. J. Sijmons and Professor Dr. J. Hubben) in the Netherlands, as well as the University of Aruba.

The research on doctoral level is titled "Regulation of quality: the right of quality health care on Aruba." This research focused on whether Aruba is meeting its obligation to ensure the quality of health care within its own laws, and if not, what proposals can be made to improve this. "In general, quality regulation must be made coherent through a coherent vision of health care quality."

Working with the Public Health Department

Dijkhoff explains that after finishing his study of law at the University of Aruba, he has been driven to do a research. The opportunity presented itself in 2012, when he became a legal consultant in the Department of Public Health. As gained experience in the different aspects of public health care, he collaborated in introducing two new laws: "Professions of Health Care" and "Quality of Public Health Care." After implementation of both laws, the general opinion was divided leading to more pressure on the Aruban government. The government requested more insight on the quality of service at the hospital and therefore invited Dijkhoff to discuss this matter. This was when Dijkhoff met Professor Dr. Hubben, a practical and experienced person whom he approached to be his promotor. "Professions of Health Care" and "Quality of Public Health Care" were long expected laws with the hope that a change would occur in the island's health care quality.

The right to high quality health care

Following the standard procedure to achieve a doctoral, Dijkhoff's road to graduation was not without obstacles. He faced the challenges of balancing work, study and family. "It was a wonderful experience, where I learned a lot es-



pecially that good or bad quality leads to good or bad cost, and eventually to good or bad results." His promotional research contains 400 pages and points out that Aruba has the responsibility to regulate the public health care system, an essential part of the right to quality health care.

This has resulted in reformed laws of quality health care in 2014, based on the quality regulation of the Netherlands. The result were the two former mentioned new laws: "Professions in health care" and "Quality of public health care". However the impact of both laws was not evaluated up to now. The right to quality health care is drawn in international treaties but it depends on each country's national laws whether they participate in these treaties. First one needs to determine what defines quality health care.

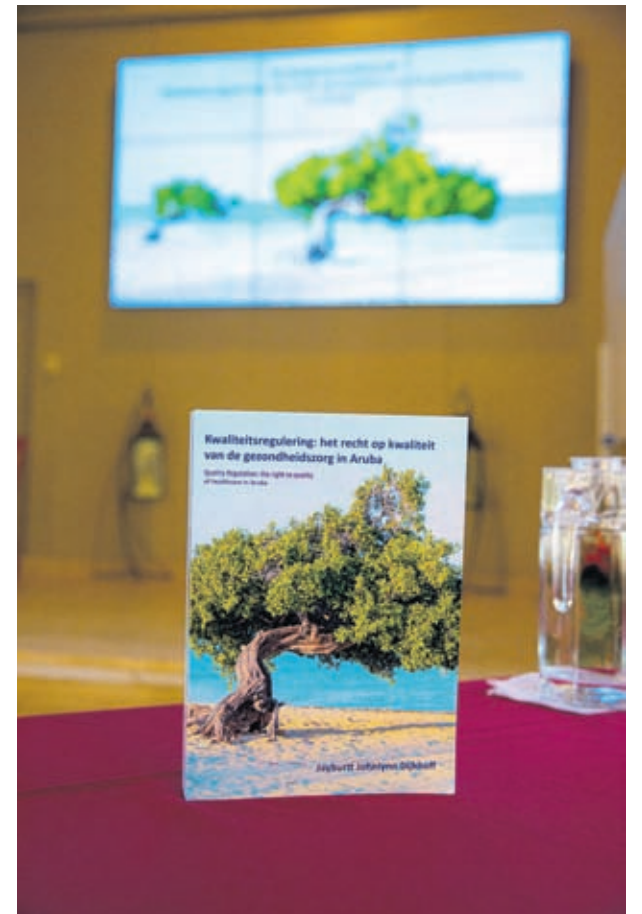
Is Aruba complying with its responsibility?

The main question in Dijkhoff's research is if Aruba is meeting its obligation to ensure the quality of health care within our own laws, and if not, what proposals can be made to improve this. The conclusion is that the island is not complying this obligation.

Aruba's formal and informal regulation is insufficiently developed to comply with the obligation of right to quality health care. All laws steering health care are based on own regulation and turn out to be insufficiently working. In reality, the laws are outdated or incompletely implemented which carries the consequences of failing integration in their area. "Aruba's laws are not functioning well and in practice are based on Dutch guidelines."

Aruba is falling behind

Dijkhoff analyzed the laws of health care quality and compared them with the Dutch laws to determine if Aruba is meeting the requirements of the right to quality health care. In the Netherlands, these laws are without embargo not centralized and therefore it is necessary to follow the five steps of development, drawn up by Professor Dr. Sijmons. After studying the Dutch laws, Dijkhoff could conclude that Aruba is falling behind in the regulation on quality health



care. The different laws that determine the required quality show that the government is unable to revise these laws individually. It needed to revise the system to harmonize each law and better regulations. Aruba has made an effort to lay a foundation with the introduction of the two new laws, but both are insufficient because of incomplete implementation and insufficient harmony. The lack of own regulation is another obstacle for optimal function of all health care laws on the island. If we look at the Netherlands we can see that quality regulations are based on own laws and this is functioning well.

In need of a fresh approach

Considering that Aruba is not complying with its obligations, Dijkhoff formulated proposals to better this situation. The most important one is the introduction of a complete new systematic approach. He recommends to revise each separate law on quality of health care. Secondly, Aruba needs to comply with article 2 in the European Convention of Human Rights elaborating on the right to life. The introduction of a legal amendment to assure the right to independent and impartial investigations in the case of death of a patient under the responsibility of health care. The Funeral Law and Death Declaration Law must not oblige a doctor to determine the cause of death at the moment of death determination.

Dedicated to his father

The evaluation commission consisted of Dr. A. Brenninkmeijer (University of Utrecht), Dr. Huisman (University of Utrecht), and Dr. H. Bröring (University of Groningen), Dr. F. Koenraadt (University of Curacao) and Glenn Thode, rector of the University of Aruba. Others who supported this thesis were Dr. Cees Hamelink, Dr. Glenn Sankatsing and Dr. Viola van Bogaert. Dijkhoff thanked the collaboration of Aruba's court house and all people who contributed to the research and thesis. A special word of thanks went to his family, particularly to his wife. The graduation is dedicated to his father who stimulated and guided his son to his final achievement. □



Did U.S. hiring slow because of a 'labor shortage'?

By **CHRISTOPHER RUGABER**

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The anticipation for the U.S. jobs report for April, released Friday morning, was high.

Most experts agreed that after a yearlong pandemic, tens of millions of layoffs and widespread disease and death, a likely second straight month of nearly 1 million added jobs would send a clear signal: The economy was bounding back toward full health after a devastating recession. Instead, the report was a clunker. To nearly everyone's surprise, employers added a comparatively paltry 266,000 jobs, down drastically from a gain of 770,000 in March, which itself was revised down from an initially much higher figure of 916,000.

Once the shock wore off, economists grappled with a host of questions, starting with: What happened last month — and why? What did the tepid hiring gain say about the state of the job market and the economy? And is there really a labor shortage?

Q. SO WHY WAS THE JOB GAIN SO LOW?

A. The broadest explanation is that any time an economy has to recover from a severe shock, it isn't likely to proceed smoothly. But the pandemic may be causing a broader reshaping of the economy as companies, workers and customers adapt to a new normal. Month-to-month job gains will be choppy. In fact, the swiftness and strength of the recovery so far are themselves part of the cause.

Consumer confidence has surged, and many companies report soaring demand as Americans unleash pent-up desires to travel, eat out, and shop. Sales of new cars and homes are still rising. Yet because the economy is rebounding faster than almost anyone thought it would, many companies were caught flat-footed. Surging consumer demand has caused widespread shortages of parts and raw materials, including lumber,



In this Tuesday, March 2, 2021, file photo, a woman, wearing a protective mask due to the COVID-19 virus outbreak, walks past the signs of an employment agency, in Manchester, N.H.

Associated Press

semiconductor chips and even chicken wings.

Now, workers themselves can be added to the list of shortages. Companies are advertising more jobs than they were before the pandemic, when the unemployment rate was a 50-year low of 3.5%. So they clearly want to add workers. Yet hiring stumbled in April because many employers couldn't attract as many as they needed.

Q. WHY AREN'T EMPLOYERS ABLE TO HIRE MORE EASILY?

A. Several things: Millions of people avoided looking for a job in April because they feared becoming infected by the coronavirus, according to a government survey. About 2 million women have stopped looking for work since the pandemic, likely because of disruptions in schooling and child care. In April, all the net job growth went to men; women as a group lost jobs. In addition, construction companies and factories have been left short of parts because of clogged supply chains and have had to slow production.

Hiring weakened in both sectors in April.

And some businesses complain that a \$300-a-week federal unemployment benefit, provided in President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion rescue package, has meant that many unemployed people can re-

ceive more income from unemployment aid than from their former jobs. Jan Riggins, who manages two Express staffing offices in Fort Worth, Texas, said that some job seekers have turned down offers that paid less than they were receiving from benefits. She said health concerns are also a factor, noting that the open jobs that allow working from home, such as taking customer service calls, have been quickly filled.

Q. WILL ALL THESE ISSUES CONTINUE TO HOLD DOWN HIRING IN THE COMING MONTHS?

A. It's possible. But most economists say they think April's slowdown will prove temporary. Daniel Zhao, senior economist at Glassdoor, an employment website, notes that Google searches for jobs had declined from mid-March and only rebounded in late April — after the government had compiled the jobs data for last month.

The average workweek rose last month, evidence that companies are asking their employees to work more and will likely need to add workers soon.

And the number of first-time applications for unemployment aid has dropped steadily in the past month, a sign that layoffs are slowing. More people are returning to the job market to look for work again: About

750,000 people have re-joined the workforce in the past two months. All of that should help employers fill more jobs.

Q. ARE UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE REALLY AVOIDING JOBS FOR THE EXTRA \$300 A WEEK IN FEDERAL JOBLESS AID?

This is a contentious question. One academic research paper has found that for every 10% increase in unemployment benefits, job applications decline by nearly 4%. Yet last spring, when the federal jobless benefit was \$600 — twice as large — nearly 7.7 million people returned to work.

Many of the unemployed say the extra benefit does help them take more time to seek better jobs than they had before the downturn. That impulse can create a problem for business owners and executives, who often want to hire immediately. To them, the surge in customer demand emerging from the pandemic represents an opportunity to win new clients or increase market share.

On Friday, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen downplayed the effect of the additional jobless aid on the willingness of the unemployed to seek work. She said at a news conference that in states that provide higher unemployment payments, the data shows the unemployed are actually more likely to find work than in states that provide

lower benefits.

Q. IF COMPANIES CAN'T FIND MORE WORKERS, WHY NOT OFFER HIGHER PAY?

A. There are signs that more employers are doing just that. Friday's jobs report showed that average hourly pay rose 0.7% in April to \$30.17. For a single month, that's a solid gain. Walmart, Amazon and Costco have all broadly raised their hourly wages in recent months. Still, not all companies are willing to do so. Not yet anyway.

Q. ARE OTHER FACTORS HOLDING DOWN JOB GROWTH?

A. Many small businesses closed in the pandemic, particularly in downtowns that emptied out as white-collar workers fled to work from home. Kristen Broady, an economist at the Brookings Institution, noted that some of those companies have announced that they will continue to allow their employees to work from home, at least for part of the week. That trend will likely hurt downtown coffee shops, dry cleaners, gyms, and restaurants.

"When you think about those people," Broady said, "their work circumstances may never go back to pre-COVID."

And Caren Merrick, CEO of VA Ready, a Virginia-based job training program, said that many employers appear too picky about whom they hire.

Her organization trains laid-off workers, most from the restaurant and hotel industries, for jobs in health care, manufacturing, and information technology. Some of the trainees who earn certifications are told by employers that they lack experience. Those companies could do more to find workers, she said, such as creating apprenticeships or dropping requirements for college degrees.

"Some companies have barriers themselves that prevent them from hiring the people that they need," Merrick said. "They need to make a greater effort." □

Facebook's oversight board: Watchdog or distraction?

By **BARBARA ORTUTAY and MATT O'BRIEN**
AP Technology Writers

Facebook's oversight board, which on Wednesday upheld the company's

advertising-based business model might also amplify extremism.

The watchdog group Public Citizen said it was troubling that Facebook declined, for instance, to say how its news feed affected the visibility of Trump's posts.

"Not everybody sees what any individual posts, so the algorithms decide who sees it, how they see it, when they see it and Facebook presumably has all kinds of information about the engagement levels," said Robert Weissman, the group's president. "The company owes us all a post mortem on the way Facebook is used and operated — did it amplify what Trump was saying and contribute to the insurrection."

"The question that everybody's asking is if Facebook is in a lucrative market and is confronted with a political leader who incites violence, will Facebook choose human rights and human safety above its bottom line?" said Chinmayi Arun, a fellow at Yale Law School's Information Society Project.

"It's fair to say a former U.S. president is not the only world leader seen as inciting violence."

Facebook created the oversight panel to rule on thorny content issues following widespread criticism of its mishandling of misinformation, hate speech and nefarious influence campaigns on its platform. The Trump decision was the board's 10th since it began taking on cases late last year. The board's nine previous decisions have tended to favor free expression over the restriction of content.

The company funds the board through an "independent trust." Its 20 members, which will eventually grow to 40, include a former prime minister of Denmark, the former editor-in-chief of the Guardian newspaper, plus legal scholars, human rights experts and journalists. The first four board members were directly chosen by Facebook. Those four then worked with Facebook to select additional members. □



In this April 14, 2020 file photo, the thumbs up Like logo is shown on a sign at Facebook headquarters in Menlo Park, Calif.

Associated Press

ban of former President Donald Trump, also had some harsh words for the company. Calling Facebook's indefinite ban of Trump a "vague, standardless penalty," the board accused Facebook -- its corporate sponsor -- of seeking to "avoid its responsibilities" by asking its quasi-independent oversight group to resolve the issue.

But critics aren't convinced that the board's decision represents a triumph of independence or accountability. Many, in fact, see its narrow focus on one-off content issues as a distraction from deeper problems such as Facebook's massive power, its shadowy algorithms that can amplify hate and misinformation, and more serious and complicated questions about government regulation.

"It's much easier to talk about Donald Trump" than about Facebook's business, said Color Of Change President Rashad Robinson, a longtime critic of Facebook. "They want to keep us in conversation about this piece of content or that piece of content, that this is about freedom of speech rather than about algorithms amplifying certain types of content, which has nothing to do with freedom of speech."

The board, Robinson said, is "is a ruse to stave off regulatory action."

Coming after months of deliberation and nearly 10,000 public comments on the matter, the board's decision on Trump told Facebook to specify how long the suspension of his account would last, saying

that its "indefinite" ban on Trump was unreasonable. The ruling, which gives Facebook six months to comply, effectively postpones any possible Trump reinstatement and puts the onus for that decision squarely back on the company. "They made the right choice," said Yael Eisenstat, a former CIA officer who worked for six months in 2018 as Facebook's global head for election-integrity operations for political advertising and is now a researcher at Betalab. But the focus on the oversight-board process, she said, gives Facebook exactly what it wants. "We're diverting our time, attention and energy away from the more important discussion about how to hold the company accountable for their own tools, designs and business decisions that helped spread dangerous conspiracy theories," she said.

Facebook said it has publicly made clear that the oversight board is not a replacement for regulation.

"We established the independent Oversight Board to apply accountability and scrutiny of our actions," the company said in a statement. "It is the first body of its kind in the world: an expert-led independent organization with the power to impose binding decisions on a private social media company."

One major source of concern among Facebook critics: The oversight board reported that the company refused to answer detailed questions about how its technical features and

CROSSWORD

By **THOMAS JOSEPH**

ACROSS 40 Like peas

1 Fashion

5 Members of the force

9 French novelist Albert

10 Skilled

12 Sports spot

13 Baseball's Yogi

14 Major highway accident

16 Relatives

17 Wallet bills

18 Walks proudly

21 Tennis court divider

22 Pancake house choices

23 Georgia city

24 Indifference

26 Mouse chaser

29 Setting

30 Baby's call

31 Stretch of years

32 Support

34 So far

37 Stood up

38 Low card

39 Crew members

DOWN

1 Member of the Corps

2 Egg dish

3 Sandy hills

4 Jacob's twin

5 Hailed vehicle

6 Poem of praise

7 Become cheerful

8 Ship spars

9 Poultry buy

11 Works leather

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ZIPIT				AMEND
ELI				SEE
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INGOT				SUSIE
STEPS				MEND

Saturday's answer

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20 Baseball	28 VCR
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Guard	35 Green
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5-10

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-10

CRYPTOQUOTE

VA GYRRFQ HUYR DFADOF

RFOO MAK, HAQCB YVC JCFYB

LYV LUYVPF RUF HAQOC.

— QAIJV HJOJYGB

Saturday's Cryptoquote: CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN THAT READING IS PLEASURE, NOT JUST SOMETHING THAT TEACHERS MAKE YOU DO IN SCHOOL. — BEVERLY CLEARY

China says most rocket debris burned up during reentry



In this April 29, 2021, file photo released by China's Xinhua News Agency, a Long March 5B rocket carrying a module for a Chinese space station lifts off from the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site in Wenchang in southern China's Hainan Province.

Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China's space agency said a core segment of its biggest rocket reentered Earth's atmosphere above the Maldives in the Indian Ocean and that most of it burned up early Sunday. Harvard astrophysicist Jonathan McDowell, who tracked the tumbling rocket part, said on Twitter, "An ocean reentry was always statistically the most likely. It appears China won its gamble... But it was still reckless." People in Jordan, Oman and Saudi Arabia reported sightings of the Chinese rocket debris on social media, with scores of users posting footage of the debris piercing the early dawn skies over the Middle East. Usually, discarded rocket stages reenter the atmosphere soon after lift-off, normally over water, and don't go into orbit. China's official Xinhua News Agency later clarified that reentry occurred Sunday at 10:24 a.m. Beijing time. "The vast majority of items were burned beyond recognition during the reentry process," the report said. Despite that, NASA Administrator Sen. Bill Nelson issued a statement saying: "It is clear that China is failing to meet responsible standards regarding their space debris." The roughly 30-meter (100-

foot) long rocket stage is among the biggest space debris to fall to Earth. China's space program, with its close military links, hasn't said why it put the main component of the rocket into space rather than allowing it to fall back to earth soon after discharging its payload, as is usual in such operations. The Long March 5B rocket carried the main module of China's first permanent space station — Tianhe, or Heavenly Harmony — into orbit on April 29. China plans 10 more launches to carry additional parts of the space station into orbit. An 18-ton rocket that fell

last May was the heaviest debris to fall uncontrolled since the former Soviet space station Salyut 7 in 1991. China's first-ever space station, Tiangong-1, crashed into the Pacific Ocean in 2016 after Beijing confirmed it had lost control. In 2019, the space agency controlled the demolition of its second station, Tiangong-2, in the atmosphere. Both had been briefly occupied by Chinese astronauts as precursors to China's permanent station, now under construction. In March, debris from a Falcon 9 rocket launched by U.S. aeronautics company SpaceX fell

to Earth in Washington and on the Oregon coast. China was heavily criticized after sending a missile to destroy a defunct weather satellite in January 2007, creating a large field of hazardous debris imperiling satellites and other spacecraft. □

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Review: Jason Statham, Guy Ritchie reunite and have a blast

By **MARK KENNEDY**

AP Entertainment Writer

Jason Statham says very, very little in his new film. The English actor must have only need to memorize about three pages of dialogue. But, as always, he's very expressive with his hands. And the guns in them.

"You ain't much for talking, are you, Mary Poppins?" he is asked in a locker room taunt. What's your guess that whoever said that is going to survive this movie? Steely Statham reunites with director-writer Guy Ritchie for a stylish revenge-heist mashup "Wrath of Man," building on a partnership that has previously produced "Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels," "Snatch" and "Revolver." Both men are in their ideal element in "Wrath of Man" — Statham on a cool and consistent murder spree of bad guys and Ritchie capturing it all with his kinetic filmmaking style and restless camera.

Loosely based on the 2004 French film "Cash Truck," the story starts with the messy, bloody assault on a Los Angeles armored truck hauling money and thrillingly returns again and again to this key moment.



This image released by Metro Goldwyn Mayer Pictures shows Jason Statham in a scene from "Wrath of Man," a film by Guy Ritchie.

Statham is hired as a guard in the aftermath of the attack and soon shines at Fortico Security, mainly because he is so deadly that he kills would-be thieves — including a moonlighting Post Malone — without ever crouching or dodging. He just walks straight toward them, pumping bullets and never misses. Someone calls him "unambiguously precise."

It turns out that this guy is not the overqualified security officer we thought. He's undercover on a mission to avenge his son's death. "I do bear a grudge," he admits in one of the few moments he speaks. (A co-worker has a more extreme observation: "I'm starting to

think he's a psychopath.") The screenplay — co-written by Ritchie, Ivan Atkinson and Marn Davies — leans on a classic Ritchie trick of scrambling time by jumping ahead and then back. That adds a little faux-European chic to what is pretty much a predictable Yankee formula.

Viewers are given helpful title cards — like "Five Months Later" and "Five Months Earlier" — but they often seem to conflict with each other and also step on the extensive very-Ritchie chapter titles ("Bad Animals, Bad" and "Liver, Lungs, Spleen & Heart").

Ritchie's love of colorful nicknames is also again evident — look for guys

named "Boy Sweat Dave" and "Bullet" — and his ultra-violence set to discordant music has not dimmed: Listen to "Folsom Prison Blues" while a man is being beaten with his head in a plastic bag.

"Wrath of Man" finds Ritchie in a moody midlife mood, his urge to be quirkily unpredictable now contained, even as his camera still swings around, going backward, ahead or soaring above. There is menace, a dull darkness and stillness, as if he's watched "Heat" too many times.

The film starts to leak momentum — like drops of blood from a body pumped with bullets — until we are introduced to a

new armed robbery crew led by "Burn Notice" star Jeffrey Donovan. Perfect for a heist flick, he virtually swipes the film from under Statham's glare.

Donovan's crew is made up of disgruntled U.S. military men whose return to civilian life hasn't gone smoothly, so they turn to crime. "It's a lot more profitable than killing Arabs," one says helpfully.

These military guys make good criminals since they adore recon and planning. They have their sights on a big heist at Fortico Security but their bravado is undercut when their crime-scene diorama uses toy cars with hand-lettered labels reading "SWAT." Also their choice of silver Prius as their getaway ride is welcome news to the small community of both criminally inclined but environmentally conscious.

A showdown between Donovan and Statham is in the cards, though Statham is warned by the opposing robbers that, "Today is not the day to be a hero." Alas, it's in his DNA. He IS going to be the hero today, despite what seems like a deflating ending and a lot of spent casings. But he's a hero with few words. □

Associated Press

R&B singer Aaron Neville, 80, retires from touring

By **CHEVEL JOHNSON**

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Fans of the sweet, melodic sounds of New Orleans' legendary vocalist Aaron Neville won't have many opportunities to hear him live from now on.

In posts Thursday on his official website and via social media, Neville announced his official retirement from touring.

Now 80, Neville said embarking on multi-date tours is no longer appealing.

"The time has come for me to stop ripping and running on the road," Neville wrote. "I waited for someone to invent a way to beam me from show to show but no such luck. ... Unfortunately, the gruel-



In this Saturday, Jan. 6, 2018 file photo, Singer Aaron Neville performs during A Concert For Island Relief at Radio City Music Hall in New York.

Associated Press

ing nature of travel and the schedule needed to make a tour work has become less than desirable. The current climate of our world brought me many realizations. Life is

short and I'd like to spend my remaining time on this earth being less hurried." Still, Neville said his love for singing has not waned. "It provides so much joy for me, at least as much

as for those listening, if not more," he said. "Don't see this as a permanent goodbye, by the grace of God, I will keep making more music and may show up at a special event or concert down the road," he promises. Neville hasn't performed live since March 2020, when the coronavirus pandemic caused concerts to come to an abrupt halt in the U.S. Instead, he has livestreamed solo performances from Freville Farm, the 12-acre home in upstate New York where he and his wife, photographer Sarah A. Friedman, have lived since 2013. The virus is of great concern to Neville, whose old age and asthma makes him especially at

risk of developing a severe case of COVID-19.

"I don't want to get sick," Neville said in an article last year written for AARP. "So, I canceled my tour dates and we've been home and isolated on our farm in New York."

Neville's solo career flourished after the 1966 release of "Tell It Like It Is" and a later collaboration with Linda Ronstadt on "Don't Know Much" and "All My Life."

He also garnered much of his fame from his work with the Neville Brothers, an R&B, funk and soul group that was based in his hometown of New Orleans and also consisted of his brothers Art, Charles and Cyril. □

Medina Spirit could lose Ky. Derby win; track bans Baffert

By **GARY B. GRAVES**

AP Sports Writer

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) —

Medina Spirit's victory in the Kentucky Derby is in serious jeopardy because of a failed postrace drug test, one that led Churchill Downs to suspend Hall of Fame trainer Bob Baffert on Sunday in the latest scandal to plague the sport.

Baffert denied all wrongdoing and promised to be fully transparent with the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission during its investigation. Baffert's barn received word Saturday that Medina Spirit had tested positive for an excessive amount of the steroid betamethasone, which is sometimes used to treat pain and inflammation in horses.

Medina Spirit's win over Mandaloun in the Derby stands — for now.

"To be clear, if the findings are upheld, Medina Spirit's results in the Kentucky Derby will be invalidated and Mandaloun will be declared the winner," Churchill Downs officials said in a statement shortly after Baffert held a hastily planned morning news conference outside his barn to announce and respond to the allegations. The track said failure to comply with the rules and medication protocols jeopardizes the safety of horses and jockeys, the sport's integrity and the Derby's reputation.

"Churchill Downs will not tolerate it," the statement read. "Given the seriousness of the alleged offense, Churchill Downs will immediately suspend Bob Baffert, the trainer of Medina Spirit, from entering any horses at Churchill Downs Racetrack."

Medina Spirit is expected to run in the Preakness on Saturday, barring some abrupt change in plans or a decision from officials at Pimlico or Maryland's racing commission that would prevent him from entering the second jewel of the Triple Crown.

Officials from 1/ST Racing, a branding arm of the Strohach Group that owns and operates Pimlico, and the

Maryland Jockey Club said Sunday they would consult with state authorities and that "any decision regarding the entry of Medina Spirit in the 146th Preakness Stakes will be made after review of the facts." Officials rescheduled the post position draw for Tuesday afternoon, moving it back a day in light of the uncertainty.

"I got the biggest gut-punch in racing for something that I didn't do," Baffert said of the failed drug test. "And it's disturbing. It's an injustice to the horse. ... I don't know what's going on in racing right now, but there's something not right. I don't feel embarrassed. I feel like I was wronged. We're going to do our own investigation. We're go-

ing to be transparent with the racing commission, like we've always been.

"He's a great horse. He doesn't deserve this. He ran a gallant race," Baffert added.

The only horse to be disqualified for medication after winning the Derby is Dancer's Image in 1968. Medina Spirit is Baffert's fifth horse known to have failed a drug test in just over a year.

Flanked by his attorney Craig Robertson, Baffert said his barn was told that Medina Spirit was found to have 21 picograms of betamethasone — slightly more than double what the trainer said was the allowable amount — in a postrace sample.

Betamethasone is the



Jockey John Velazquez, left, watches as trainer Bob Baffert holds up the winner's trophy after they victory with Medina Spirit in the 147th running of the Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs, Saturday, May 1, 2021, in Louisville, Ky.

Associated Press

same drug that was found in the system of Gamine, another Baffert-trained horse who finished third in the Kentucky Oaks last September. Gamine was eventually disqualified from

that finish because of that test and Baffert was fined \$1,500. Betamethasone is legal under Kentucky racing rules, though it must be cleared 14 days before a horse races. □

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Butler strong down stretch, Heat hold off Celtics 130-124



Miami Heat's Jimmy Butler (22) shoots at the basket as Boston Celtics' Evan Fournier (94) tries to block in the second half of a basketball game, Sunday, May 9, 2021, in Boston.

Associated Press

By **KYLE HIGHTOWER**
AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — Jimmy Butler had 26 points and 11 assists to help the Miami Heat hold off the Boston Celtics 130-124 Sunday as the teams fight for position in the tight Eastern Conference playoff race.

Duncan Robinson added 22 points and Bam Adebayo finished with 20 for Miami, which increased its lead over Boston to two games for sixth place in the standings. The Heat (37-31)

now have the same record as fifth-place Atlanta, but the Hawks own the head-to-head tiebreaker.

It is the first of two straight games between Miami and Boston, which meet for the final time during the regular season on Tuesday. "It always feels great win," Butler said. "But I don't think that we closed the game like we're supposed to or capable of either. So at the same time we've got to be better."

Evan Fournier scored 30

points to lead the Celtics (35-33), who have lost three out of four as they try to avoid the play-in round of the playoffs. Jayson Tatum added 29 points and Kemba Walker finished with 18. Boston struggled offensively without All-Star Jaylen Brown, who missed his third straight game with a sprained right ankle. Big man Robert Williams III tried to play through turf toe in his left foot, scoring four points in 11 minutes in the first half. But he labored on it at times and was scratched for the second half.

"When we're not completely engaged for whatever reason, we're just not good," Celtics coach Brad Stevens said. "When we're completely engaged, we're a good basketball team. When we're not, we're not even close to being able to compete with anybody, let alone a team like Miami."

Miami led by as many as 26 in the first half before Boston stormed back, opening the third quarter on a 22-8 run to get within 12 points.

The Celtics kept chipping away and cut it all the way to 113-107 with 4:51 to play on a layup by Walker.

It was 118-109 when Fournier got free in the corner for a 3. But Robinson answered with his own 3 on Miami's ensuing possession to push the lead back to 121-112.

Walker turned it over on Boston's next trip and Adebayo scored on a put back to get the lead back to double digits. Despite having its lead eroded in the second half, Heat coach Erik Spoelstra he liked the early effort. "The menu was diverse and a lot of guys felt like they were in rhythm and involved. That's when we're at our best. When there's a lot of different threats," Spoelstra said.

Knicks 106, Clippers 100

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Derrick Rose scored 25 points off the bench, Reggie Bullock added 24 and the New York Knicks beat the Los Angeles Clippers 106-100 on Sunday to snap an eight-game skid at Staples Center.

Bullock made five 3-point-

ers against his former team and RJ Barrett had four on his way to 18 points. The Clippers are the NBA's best 3-point shooting squad, but they were just 12 of 35.

Kawhi Leonard led the Clippers with 29 points. Paul George added 18 and Nicolas Batum had 13 as the playoff-bound team's two-game winning streak ended in its home finale of the regular season.

The Knicks led by 10 early in the fourth, when they made three 3-pointers, and the Clippers dissolved in miscues and misses.

Leonard returned to the game with 5 1/2 minutes left, scoring five in a row to pull the Clippers to 96-90. He and George combined to score all of the Clippers' final 15 points. Leonard's 3-pointer cut the Knicks' lead to 104-100, but Taj Gibson made a pair of free throws to seal it.

Julius Randle finished with 14 points and 14 rebounds for the Knicks, who had plenty of supporters cheering despite the limited attendance. □

Merlier sprints to 1st ever stage win, Ganna keeps Giro lead

NOVARA, Italy (AP) — Belgian cyclist Tim Merlier won a bunch sprint at the end of the second stage of the Giro d'Italia on Sunday to claim his first ever Grand Tour stage victory, while Filippo Ganna retained the leader's pink jersey.

Merlier, who rides for Alpecin-Fenix, launched his sprint with 200 meters remaining of the mainly flat 179-kilometer (111-mile) route from Stupinigi to Novara and managed to edge out the Italian duo of Giacomo Nizzolo and Elia Viviani.

The 28-year-old Merlier lifted his hands above his head in the shape of a

"W" at the finish in tribute to Wouter Weylandt, on the 10th anniversary of the day the Belgian cyclist died while racing at the Giro in 2011.

"I paid tribute to Wouter Weylandt on the line. I knew him from the Schelde peloton," Merlier said. "I knew he was a good sprinter. I was in a training camp in the Ardennes 10 years ago at the time, it was a very emotional day.

"Today's sprint was very hectic ... I've done nice sprints before but this one is my best victory so far".

Ganna, who won the opening stage time trial, managed to slightly ex-

tend his lead in the overall standings after earning a three-second time bonus in the intermediate sprint. The Ineos Grenadiers rider is 13 seconds ahead of Italian compatriot Edoardo Affini and 16 seconds ahead of Tobias Foss of Norway.

"I did the time bonus sprint just to take it away from the others, thinking of the coming days if Egan (Bernal) or Pavel (Sivakov) are fighting for the Maglia Rosa (leader's pink jersey)," Ganna said.

"I enjoyed hearing the crowd of Piedmont yelling my name today. We know tomorrow is a perfect stage for Peter Sagan."



Belgium's Tim Merlier, left, sprints to win the second stage of the Giro d'Italia, tour of Italy cycling race from Stupinigi to Novara, Italy, Sunday, May 9, 2021.

Associated Press

Monday's third stage is a 190-kilometer (118-mile) route from Biella to Canale, with three categorized

climbs along the way. The Giro finishes on May 30 in Milan with an individual time trial. □