



	International	National	Regional and Local
<b>Events, Opportunities</b> <a href="#">Go to articles</a>	<a href="#">12/13 UN: NKorea agrees w/point to prevent war</a> <a href="#">12/13 Islamic summit seeks to counter US move</a> <a href="#">12/13 Abbas: no US role Mideast peace process</a> <a href="#">12/13 Kremlin calls US allegations 'groundless'</a> <a href="#">12/13 Another large quake jolts southern Iran</a> <a href="#">12/13 Russia increases clout in Middle East</a> <a href="#">12/13 Israel strikes back at Hamas in Gaza</a> <a href="#">12/13 China: Nanking massacre outreach</a> <a href="#">12/13 Japan: 'ghost ship' washes ashore</a> <a href="#">12/13 South Africa corruption scandal</a> <a href="#">12/13 Iran: US not an honest mediator</a> <a href="#">12/12 Iran Guards: will back Palestinian forces</a> <a href="#">12/12 Report: NKorea prisons brutality</a> <a href="#">12/12 Europe's aging energy networks</a>	<a href="#">12/13 Hard-won gains over huge Calif. wildfire</a> <a href="#">12/13 After fires, Calif. faces risk of mudslides</a> <a href="#">12/12 Massive California wildfire is still growing</a> <a href="#">12/12 Officials: homeless camp ignited wildfire</a> <a href="#">12/12 State Dept. offers direct talks to NKorea</a> <a href="#">12/12 South Dakota state park wildfire spreads</a> <a href="#">12/12 NTSB report: El Faro maritime disaster</a> <a href="#">12/12 Cold air headed to Northeast midweek</a> <a href="#">12/12 Opioid crisis straining foster system</a> <a href="#">12/12 Intifada against US decision?</a> <a href="#">12/12 America's malls rotting away</a>	<a href="#">12/13 Everett struggles w/hardcore homeless</a> <a href="#">12/12 King Co. considers changes to inquests</a> <a href="#">12/12 King Co. new shift fighting homelessness</a> <a href="#">12/12 Report: tech is most office jobs in Seattle</a> <a href="#">12/12 WA launches Maritime Advisory Council</a> <a href="#">12/12 Seattle police union agrees to pay fine</a> <a href="#">12/12 Snohomish Co. outreach to homeless</a> <a href="#">12/12 Report: WA in top-10 healthiest states</a> <a href="#">12/12 Value Village sues Wash. AG</a>
<b>Cyber Awareness</b> <a href="#">Go to articles</a>	<a href="#">12/12 Emotet info-stealer malware returns</a> <a href="#">12/12 Biggest threat to OPEC: cyberattacks</a> <a href="#">12/12 Fidget spinner app sends data to China</a> <a href="#">12/12 Security: less you spend, more you pay</a> <a href="#">12/12 Claim: bitcoin biggest bubble in history</a> <a href="#">12/12 China firm: recognize 2B people in sec.</a> <a href="#">12/12 Cyberspy group new exploit techniques</a> <a href="#">12/12 BrickerBot creators announce retirement</a> <a href="#">12/12 Impact credential-stealers in Google Play</a> <a href="#">12/12 Cryptocurrency exchanges claim outages</a> <a href="#">12/12 Iranian cyber threat continues to develop</a>	<a href="#">12/13 Govt. bans Kaspersky products</a> <a href="#">12/12 Blockchain and privacy issues</a> <a href="#">12/12 'Stealthy admin' in hybrid Office 365</a> <a href="#">12/12 Feds 'heightened posture' over hackers</a> <a href="#">12/12 Classic Android games malware infected</a> <a href="#">12/12 Report: homes mortgaged to buy bitcoin</a> <a href="#">12/12 ROBOT 19yr-old vulnerability discovered</a> <a href="#">12/12 Shutter Internet? Cut undersea cables</a> <a href="#">12/12 'Tech support' scam hits millennials</a>	<a href="#">12/12 Arrest following posted threats to cop</a>
<b>Terror Conditions</b> <a href="#">Go to articles</a>	<a href="#">12/13 Saudi-led raid on Yemen police camp</a> <a href="#">12/13 Philippines extend martial law in south</a> <a href="#">12/12 Iraq PM warns ISIS may emerge again</a> <a href="#">12/12 Russia: New Year's holiday plot foiled</a> <a href="#">12/12 US wary Putin announcement in Syria</a> <a href="#">12/12 Nigeria: teen girls suicide bombers kill 4</a>	<a href="#">12/13 Cleared Gitmo detainees 'stuck'</a> <a href="#">12/12 DHS: New England border data</a> <a href="#">12/12 NYC shrugs off attack: crowds return</a> <a href="#">12/12 Latest development NYC bomb device</a> <a href="#">12/12 Bangladesh questions bomber's family</a> <a href="#">12/12 NYC bomber taunted Trump on Facebook</a> <a href="#">12/12 Claim: NYC bomber followed radical cleric</a> <a href="#">12.12 NYPD: getting harder to stop a lone-wolf</a> <a href="#">12/12 Military: drone strike hit 'imminent threat'</a> <a href="#">12/12 Suspect claims: FBI pushed for terrorism</a>	
<b>Suspicious, Unusual</b> <a href="#">Go to articles</a>	<a href="#">12/13 Helicopter window falls off; injures child</a> <a href="#">12/12 Islamic Jihad drops Israel airstrike claim</a> <a href="#">12/12 Russia: athletes in Olympics as 'neutral'</a> <a href="#">12/12 Hardship: sold NKorea brides in China</a> <a href="#">12/12 Researcher: 'man flu' real phenomena</a> <a href="#">12/12 Closing time for Toronto strip clubs</a>	<a href="#">12/12 Earth mysterious hum recorded</a> <a href="#">12/12 Dictionary word of year: feminism</a> <a href="#">12/12 Silicon Valley paradox: 25% hunger</a> <a href="#">12/12 Arctic permafrost thawing at faster rate</a>	<a href="#">12/12 Tolls on I-405 collected \$44.5M in 2yrs</a>
<b>Crime, Criminals</b> <a href="#">Go to articles</a>	<a href="#">12/13 France complicit in Rwanda genocide?</a> <a href="#">12/12 EU aims to link visa, crime databases</a> <a href="#">12/12 Australia stops pedophile from traveling</a> <a href="#">12/12 Russia official: fake bomb calls from Syria</a>	<a href="#">12/13 Newtown coping 5yrs after massacre</a> <a href="#">12/13 Police guns are turning up in crimes</a> <a href="#">12/12 Man w/pellet gun attempts school entry</a> <a href="#">12/12 Mafia bust on Long Island; 7 arrests</a> <a href="#">12/12 What is 'excited delirium'?</a>	<a href="#">12/12 Man charged in Des Moines killing</a> <a href="#">12/12 Bellingham: serial flashers at it again</a> <a href="#">12/12 Teen charged as adult in HS shooting</a>

[DISCLAIMER and FAIR USE Notice](#)

## Event Calendar

[Top of page](#)

Date	Event	Location/Time	Other Information
9-13 Apr 2018	LEIU/IALEIA Training Event	Marriott Hotel, 700 West Convention Way	<a href="http://www.ialeia.org/2018_conference.php">http://www.ialeia.org/2018_conference.php</a>

## Events, Opportunities

[Top of page](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Seattle police union agrees to pay fine</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.thestranger.com/slog/2017/12/12/25623873/seattle-police-union-agrees-to-pay-750-for-violating-election-code">https://www.thestranger.com/slog/2017/12/12/25623873/seattle-police-union-agrees-to-pay-750-for-violating-election-code</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Seattle election law requires independent groups backing a candidate to clearly state that they're not working for for their candidate of choice.</p> <p>The Seattle Police Officers Guild (SPOG) violated that disclosure rule when it ran a full-page ad in the Seattle Times blasting City Attorney Pete Holmes, the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission (SEEC) found. SPOG has agreed to pay \$750 in a settlement with SEEC director Wayne Barnett, according to a copy of the settlement document.</p> <p>SPOG, which backed Holmes' losing opponent Scott Lindsay, shelled out \$8,600 for the ad, which called Holmes "anti-labor" and "pathetically weak on crime." But the page, published in a Sunday edition of the Times did not include mandatory language noting that no one running for office authorized the ad. SPOG did, however, include a logo in the bottom right corner of the ad spelling out the union's name. The union also turned in its report of the expenditure three days late, according to the settlement.</p> <p>Barnett said independent expenditure groups rarely gloss over this particular disclosure rule. He added that the SEEC sought a lower fine, rather than the maximum \$5,000, because SPOG included its logo in the ad.</p> <p>"This was not a case where there was an effort to conceal who was paying for the ads," Barnett said. "To me this was more about deterrence than punishing them."</p> <p>Both parties signed the settlement earlier this month.</p> <p>SPOG president Kevin Stuckey could not be reached by cell phone.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 After fires, Calif. faces risk of mudslides</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.usnews.com/news/us/articles/2017-12-13/after-fires-southern-california-faces-risk-of-mudslides">https://www.usnews.com/news/us/articles/2017-12-13/after-fires-southern-california-faces-risk-of-mudslides</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>CARPINTERIA, Calif./LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - Firefighters in Southern California are slowly gaining control of one of the largest wildfires in state history, but residents may not enjoy much relief as experts said the flames are laying the groundwork for the next disaster - mudslides.</p> <p>The intense fire is burning away vegetation that holds the soil in place and baking a waxy layer into the earth that prevents the water from sinking more than a few inches into the ground, experts said.</p> <p>With one heavy rain, the soil above this waterproof layer can become saturated, start to slide in hilly areas and transform into something catastrophic.</p> <p>"Pretty much anywhere there's a fire on a steep slope, there's cause for concern," Jason Kean, research hydrologist for the U.S. Geological Survey, said in a telephone interview.</p> <p>And the Thomas Fire, which has burned 234,000 acres and destroyed nearly 700 homes in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, is definitely in landslide country.</p>

	<p>"If we get hard rain, there are going to be terrible landslides in the burn areas," Carla D'Antonio, chairman of University of California, Santa Barbara's environmental studies program, said in an email.</p> <p>"It doesn't take a lot of rain to get the soil and rock moving, so to have burned soil on top of this and no significant plant cover creates huge potential for landslides," she added.</p> <p>Among the cities at risk is Santa Barbara, with 92,000 people, as well as the smaller communities of Carpinteria, Ojai and Summerland.</p> <p>Once the fire is out, more work will begin as officials will likely need to rush to build retention basins and other structures to prevent debris flows before the rainy season begins, said Professor Nicholas Pinter of University of California, Davis' Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences.</p> <p>"This is exactly the thing we worry about in the winter following an event like the Thomas Fire," he said by telephone.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Hard-won gains over huge Calif. wildfire</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://apnews.com/b3a58bd5f29849aa904367e11a946e57/Days-of-toil-bring-hard-won-gains-over-huge-California-fire">https://apnews.com/b3a58bd5f29849aa904367e11a946e57/Days-of-toil-bring-hard-won-gains-over-huge-California-fire</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>LOS ANGELES (AP) — Firefighters finally eked out progress on the titanic task of cutting fire lines around one of the biggest blazes in California history.</p> <p>As the fire straddling Santa Barbara and Ventura counties entered its 10th day, crews had carved containment lines around one-quarter of it.</p> <p>But the wildfire still raged Tuesday, threatening thousands of homes and stranding tens of thousands of evacuees.</p> <p>The so-called Thomas fire, one of several burning around the state, has burned over 900 structures, at least 700 of them homes. And it has stretched across nearly 370 square miles (958 sq. kilometers) of territory, making it the fifth largest in state history.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Russia increases clout in Middle East</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://apnews.com/f2777a51c0e849fdbf293c522242377e/Under-Putin,-Russia-increases-clout-in-the-Middle-East">https://apnews.com/f2777a51c0e849fdbf293c522242377e/Under-Putin,-Russia-increases-clout-in-the-Middle-East</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>MOSCOW (AP) — When Russia launched a military campaign in Syria two years ago, President Vladimir Putin sought to save his ally from imminent collapse and break Russia's international isolation over a crisis in Ukraine.</p> <p>He achieved that and more, emerging as a key stakeholder in the Middle East who has brokered deals with many of its key players — from Iran to Saudi Arabia to Turkey and Israel. It's a regional footprint that comes with a degree of clout that even the Soviet Union, which depended on a handful of Arab allies, couldn't dream of during the Cold War era.</p> <p>And it was accomplished with limited resources and a lot of audacity.</p> <p>"Vladimir Putin is determined to restore a greater role for Russia as a global power ... and the Middle East is really the main area where Russia has that potential, in part because the Soviet Union played that role in the Soviet period," said William Courtney, an adjunct senior fellow at RAND Corporation.</p>

With just a few dozen jets and several thousand troops, Russia waded into Syria's war and stubbornly pressed its campaign despite international scorn and an outcry over resulting civilian casualties.

Russia's bold intervention in Syria came as the United States under President Barack Obama steered clear of military engagement and found itself in a series of acrimonious disputes with key allies, including Israel and Saudi Arabia. Under the vastly inconsistent policies of Donald Trump, and in an era of an inward looking, America-first U.S. policy, Russia's maneuvers became all the more poignant on the global stage.

Putin's success in the region was on full display Monday, with the confident and upbeat leader moving between Syria, Egypt and Turkey in a whirlwind tour a week after announcing he will seek re-election for another six-year term in March.

Speaking to Russian troops on the tarmac at Hemeimeem air base in Syria, Putin declared victory over the Islamic State group and Syrian rebels and announced he had ordered a scaling down of the Russian contingent in Syria. In Egypt, he signed a deal for the construction of a nuclear reactor on the country's Mediterranean coast and sought to strengthen his relationship with a key regional power that has in the past three years bought billions of dollars in Russian weapons. And in Turkey, a NATO member, the Russian leader appeared to be on the same page with strongman Recep Tayyip Erdogan on key issues.

The Russian president was frequently derided for his penchant for a 19th century-style Realpolitik characterized by cynical political calculus. But Putin's approach paid off in Syria, where he managed to play on the conflicting interests of regional powers and strike deals with various players.

When Putin decided to intervene in Syria, President Bashar Assad was on the verge of collapse, his forces losing on all fronts. Within weeks, the Russian military had airlifted supplies needed to set up a base in Assad's heartland and launched an air campaign at the end of September 2015.

At first, observers were skeptical about Putin's Syria adventure given Russia's economic troubles and the overwhelming negative odds on the chaotic Syrian battlefield, where the Islamic State group, al-Qaida militants and a motley collection of rebels backed by Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey and others were routing Assad's shrinking military.

Many in the West and in Russia predicted Syria would turn into another Afghanistan — a botched Soviet intervention that led to massive losses and ended in a humiliating 1989 withdrawal after nearly a decade of fighting. Putin argued that Russia needed to intervene in Syria to fight a terror threat, but made it clear that he wasn't going to walk into a trap like the Soviet war in Afghanistan.

Another reason for skepticism was the Russian military meltdown that followed the Soviet collapse. The army's vulnerabilities were highlighted by separatist wars in Chechnya and a brief 2008 war with Georgia, where the lack of modern communications and weapons, lack of coordination between various military branches and poor discipline were woefully apparent.

But the Syrian campaign suddenly saw a different Russian military — one armed with sophisticated precision weapons, well-trained, neatly-dressed and proud of its mission.

“Putin managed to explain to the Russian people why Syria was important and not only did he explain it, he also showed them Syria wasn't going to be Afghanistan,” Dmitry Trenin, director of the Moscow Carnegie Center, told The Associated Press.

The war saw the combat debut of an array of Russian weapons, including long-range cruise missiles that were fired from surface navy ships, submarines and bombers.

The display of Moscow's revamped arsenals also served another key goal — to show the U.S. and its NATO allies that Russia no longer exclusively relies on nuclear weapons. The new cruise missiles gave Putin a long-sought long-range precision cruise capability that only the U.S. had before.

Early in the campaign, Moscow found itself on the verge of a military conflict with Ankara after a Turkish fighter jet downed a Russian warplane on the Syrian border in November 2015. But just a few months later, Putin mended ties with Turkey, offering President Recep Tayyip Erdogan strong support after a failed coup attempt. They struck a deal on Syria, setting up de-escalation zones that helped reduce fighting.

Russia also reached out to other key players — from Iran, which staunchly backed Assad, to the Saudis, the Qataris and others who supported the opposition. It also communicated with Israel to make sure the conflict didn't hurt their friendly relationship.

Russian military successes in Syria and its rapprochement with Turkey paved the way for another Putin diplomatic coup — a warming of ties with Saudi Arabia, Moscow's opponent since Cold War times when it armed Afghan fighters battling the Soviet invasion. In a first-ever visit by a Saudi monarch, King Salman visited Russia in October.

While declaring victory in Syria, Putin made it clear Russia is there to stay. He plans to expand the air base and turn a crumbling Soviet-era naval supply facility in Syria's port of Tartus into a full-fledged navy base capable of hosting big ships.

Russia has also drafted a deal with Egypt to allow its warplanes to use bases there — a deployment unseen since the times when Egypt was a key Soviet ally in the Mideast before going to the U.S. side in the mid-1970s.

Courtney, the RAND analyst, said despite Putin's successes in the region, Russia will remain a limited great power that serves mainly as a military supplier because it lacks the resources and capability that the West has for nation building or reconstruction.

"The challenge for Putin is to turn the use of his military force and military weapons supplies in the Middle East to something that is a lasting success, and we don't yet see how Russia is going to get there," he said.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

**HEADLINE** 12/13 Iran: US not an honest mediator

**SOURCE** <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2017-12-13/irans-rouhani-says-trumps-jerusalem-decision-shows-us-not-an-honest-mediator>

**GIST** ISTANBUL (Reuters) - U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital shows that the United States lacks any respect for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian nation, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani tweeted on Wednesday.

Rouhani, who attended an emergency meeting of Muslim leaders in Turkey's Istanbul city on Wednesday, also said on his Twitter account that the move showed that the U.S. was not "an honest mediator and will never be", adding that Washington only wanted to "secure the interests of the Zionists".

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

**HEADLINE** 12/12 Report: NKorea prisons brutality

**SOURCE** <http://time.com/5060144/north-korea-political-prisons/?xid=homepage>

**GIST** Political prisoners in North Korea's gulag-like penal system have been systematically tortured, raped, and executed for transgressions as minor as digging for edible plants, according to a landmark report.

The International Bar Association (IBA) War Crimes Committee on Tuesday released the findings of an investigation into clandestine North Korean political prisons known as kwanliso. Their report determines

that through these facilities, North Korea's "Supreme Leader" Kim Jong-un has presided over 10 of the 11 crimes against humanity enumerated in the Rome Statute, the founding treaty of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Among them: murder, extermination, enslavement, torture, and sexual violence.

Besides satellite images debunking Pyongyang's official line on kwanliso, the IBA report cites graphic testimonies from North Korean defectors, including a former political prison guard, and prison camp survivors.

Presented to the War Crimes Committee in Washington D.C. in 2016, the defectors' testimonies included accounts of prisoners being tortured or killed because of their religious affiliation, forced abortions, and infanticide. One account described a prisoner's newborn being fed to guard dogs. Each year at one of the camps, according to defector testimonies, authorities deliberately overwork and starve to death between 1,500 and 2,000 mostly child prisoners.

The ICC should now investigate and prosecute Kim for crimes against humanity, the report concludes, as well as complicit members of the Workers' Party of Korea and its Politburo.

Before the report's publication, former ICC judge Thomas Buergenthal, a child survivor of Auschwitz, told the Washington Post, "conditions in the [North] Korean prison camps are as terrible, or even worse, than those I saw and experienced in my youth in these Nazi camps and in my long professional career in the human rights field."

"There is not a comparable situation anywhere in the world, past or present," former United Nations high commissioner for human rights Navi Pillay, another of the report's authors, told the Post.

Between 80,000 and 130,000 North Korean political prisoners are thought to be detained in gulag-like facilities in the country. Although Pyongyang officially denies holding dissidents captive, satellite images cited by the IBA show apparent kwanliso occupying tracts of land studded with guard towers and encircled by electric fencing and barbed wire.

According to Steven Kay QC, a past chair of the IBA's War Crimes Committee, the investigation set out to determine whether kwanliso established decades ago by Kim Jong Un's grandfather still exist and, if so, whether the treatment of detainees inside constitutes crimes against humanity. "It was believed that whole generations of families still remained in these isolated camps and the people incarcerated in barbaric conditions had no prospect of release," Kay tells TIME in a statement.

The report's exposure of horrific conditions persisting at the five designated camp areas in North Korea, Kay adds, "shines a light upon what happens to ordinary people who have no political voice and no rights including that of survival."

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 State Dept. offers direct talks to NKorea</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://time.com/5061985/tillerson-north-korea-talks/?xid=homepage">http://time.com/5061985/tillerson-north-korea-talks/?xid=homepage</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>(WASHINGTON) — U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson offered on Tuesday to begin direct talks with North Korea without preconditions, backing away from a key U.S. demand that Pyongyang must first accept that any negotiations would have to be about giving up its nuclear arsenal.</p> <p>"Let's just meet," Tillerson said in a speech to Washington's Atlantic Council think tank, presenting a new diplomatic overture amid heightened tensions over North Korea's nuclear and missile advances and harsh rhetoric between the two sides.</p> <p>The White House later issued an ambiguous statement that left unclear whether President Donald Trump — who has said in the past that Tillerson was wasting his time pursuing dialogue with North Korea — had given his approval for the speech</p>

“The president’s views on North Korea have not changed,” the White House said. “North Korea is acting in an unsafe way. ... North Korea’s actions are not good for anyone and certainly not good for North Korea.”

The apparent shift in Tillerson’s thinking came nearly two weeks after North Korea said it had successfully tested a new intercontinental ballistic missile in what it called a “breakthrough” that put the United States mainland within range.

While reiterating Washington’s position that it cannot accept a nuclear-armed North Korea, Tillerson said the United States was “ready to talk anytime they’re ready to talk.” But he insisted there would have to be a “period of quiet” without nuclear and missile tests to have productive discussions.

Tillerson also disclosed that the United States had been talking to China about how to secure North Korea’s nuclear weapons in the event of a collapse of the government in Pyongyang, and that Beijing had been given assurances that if U.S. forces had to cross into North Korea they would pull back across the border into South Korea.

But he made clear that the United States wants to resolve the North Korea standoff through peaceful diplomacy, and in terms far more tempered than Trump’s recent threats against Pyongyang, offered to hold exploratory talks.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Value Village sues Wash. AG</b>
-----------------	--

<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://mynorthwest.com/843723/value-village-sues-washington-attorney-general-over-demands/">http://mynorthwest.com/843723/value-village-sues-washington-attorney-general-over-demands/</a>
---------------	---

<b>GIST</b>	SEATTLE (AP) — The company that operates 300 Value Village, Savers and other thrift stores in the U.S., Canada and Australia is suing Washington state Attorney General Bob Ferguson, saying his office has violated the company’s rights by demanding \$3.2 million to settle a three-year investigation.
-------------	--

TVI Inc., of Bellevue, said in the lawsuit filed in federal court Monday that it’s trying to head off an anticipated complaint from the attorney general’s office.

The for-profit company, which is represented by the prominent Seattle law firm of Davis Wright Tremaine, said Ferguson’s demand for payment does not appear to be connected to any alleged legal violations.

TVI also said the attorney general’s office insisted that its disclose to customers how much of the sale price of items in its stores goes to charities, something the company said would violate its free-speech rights and is precluded by Supreme Court precedent.

Brionna Aho, a spokeswoman at the attorney general’s office, noted the company paid \$1.8 million to six Minnesota charities and agreed to overhaul its donation and disclosure practices in a 2015 settlement with that state’s attorney general.

“Value Village’s lawsuit is riddled with omissions and inaccuracies. There’s a reason they agreed to pay \$1.8 million as a result of the Minnesota Attorney General’s investigation,” Ferguson said in a statement Tuesday evening. “No target is ever happy to be investigated by our office. However, my office will continue vigorously protecting consumers from deception.”

Ferguson, a Democrat, has garnered national attention for challenging the Trump administration on several fronts, including the travel ban and ban on transgender people joining the military. But he has also made consumer issues a priority, suing to hold opioid makers accountable for the national addiction crisis and agrochemical giant Monsanto liable over pervasive pollution from PCBs.

TVI said it operates 20 stores in Washington state. It pays charities such as Northwest Center, which supports developmentally disabled people, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound to collect items — clothes, furniture, electronics, other household items — which it then sells for a profit at the stores. The money the charities make providing the goods is a key part of their revenue stream.

In its complaint, the company said the attorney general’s office launched its investigation three years ago. TVI answered all of the investigators’ questions, provided 15,000 pages of documents, and sought to meet with them to address any concerns, the company said.

Ferguson’s office refused to meet with the company for a year and a half, the complaint said. When the sides did confer in summer 2016, the attorney general’s office issued a set of demands — the vast majority of which the company said it already complied with. TVI refused demands that it post signs telling people who donate goods what it pays the charities for those goods, and what bulk rates it pays charities for donations.

The attorney general also sought a \$5.1 million penalty, which the company declined to pay. After that, the lawsuit said, TVI heard nothing for 11 months — until a meeting last August, when the attorney general’s office “reduced its monetary demand to \$3.2 million, but admitted this amount was ‘untethered’ to any actual, specific alleged violations of law.”

Again, the company refused to pay, and further attempts to negotiate failed. In an effort to avoid being sued, the company said it brought the chief executives of Northwest Center and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound to a hastily arranged meeting with the attorney general’s office on Dec. 8, but the office’s representatives made no promises that they would continue negotiating.

“The AGO’s imminent threat to prosecute suit against TVI is apparent, necessitating this action to protect the First Amendment rights of TVI and its charity partners,” the complaint said.

Sara Gaugl, a company spokeswoman, said in an emailed statement the company is confident the issue will be resolved soon.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Everett struggles w/hardcore homeless</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://mynorthwest.com/844216/hard-hit-by-opioids-a-city-struggles-with-hardcore-homeless/">http://mynorthwest.com/844216/hard-hit-by-opioids-a-city-struggles-with-hardcore-homeless/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>EVERETT, Wash. (AP) — This is the lesson that the working-class city of Everett has learned: It takes a community to rescue the hardcore homeless.</p> <p>It takes teams of outreach workers — building relationships with men and women struggling with addiction or untreated mental illness, prodding them to get help. It takes police and other agencies, working together to provide for their needs.</p> <p>And it takes a prosecutor who was tired of managing the unending cycle of homelessness — jail-street-jail-street-jail. Hil Kaman left his job prosecuting the homeless and took up the challenge of finding solutions. For starters, he helped put together a team that would track the 25 most costly and vulnerable cases, and hover over each one individually until he or she was in treatment or housing.</p> <p>“It was when everything else seems to have failed,” said Kaman, who became the city’s public health and safety director 17 months ago.</p> <p>“They’ll bring someone to jail several hundred times, bring someone to the emergency department dozens of times — the (people) resistant to treatment and other alternatives. It was a call to say, ‘Isn’t there anything else that we could do?’”</p> <p>In two years, Everett’s specialized team has found some form of housing for 14 chronically homeless</p>



people on its by-name list. The city's newly formed community outreach enforcement team has gotten more than two dozen people into long-term treatment, primarily using beds paid through a partnership with a nonprofit that helps officers deal with the opioid crisis. The city also set up a flex fund that accepts private donations to help pay for motel rooms, bus tickets and other costs.

It's among an array of strategies the city has tried. There is still much work to do: Everett, a city of 110,000 north of Seattle hard-hit by the opioid epidemic, and surrounding Snohomish County saw a 65 percent jump in people living outside between 2015 and 2017 — one of the largest increases on the West Coast in that period, according to a one-night count earlier this year.

The number of unsheltered chronically homeless — those who have been homeless for longer than a year while struggling with a serious mental illness, substance use disorder or physical disability — has grown steadily in the Everett region, more than doubling since 2015. That's even as the city and county added more supportive housing.

Kaman and others say a combination of the opioid epidemic, poverty, lack of unskilled jobs, rising rents, and a shortage of affordable housing have made it even harder for those who fall into homelessness to get out.

The problem is not limited to Everett; up and down the West Coast, the high cost of housing has forced thousands of people to live on the streets, a trend that opioids have exacerbated.

“These are expensive places to live. It's expensive for everybody. But the burden falls the hardest on people with the biggest problems,” said Steve Berg, vice president for programs and policy with the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

---

In 2011, roughly one in every five opioid-related deaths in Washington state took place in this county. That was the peak, but heroin deaths remain high and deaths from synthetic opioids such as fentanyl are climbing. Last month, county officials partially activated its emergency coordination center, typically used for natural disasters, to respond to the opioid crisis. So far this year, health officials have collected 2 million discarded needles.

In this former lumber town on scenic Puget Sound, where thousands of workers assemble the newest Boeing airplanes, the crisis had become so dire that Everett city officials became the first to sue the manufacturer of the painkiller OxyContin this year. The city blames Purdue Pharma for an addiction crisis that has overwhelmed city resources and deepened its homelessness problem.

Kaman joined the city's mayor, police chief, city council members and others who drove to Seattle in September for the city's successful argument that a federal judge allow its lawsuit against the drug manufacturer to proceed.

While that case works through the court, social workers and police officers are fanning out to find people camping under the freeway or living in RVs or the woods and try to connect them to services. Many of them initially deflect treatment, or are too ill to even know they need aid.

---

For every person who finds a treatment bed or permanent supportive housing, many more wait. Until this summer, when a second facility opened, the county had only 16 publicly funded detox beds for its 785,000 residents. Many must go out of the county, or even state, to find beds.

Experts say lack of on-demand treatment and a shortage of appropriate housing to meet specific needs are among the biggest barriers to helping people off the streets. Without permanent housing, advocates and city officials say the homeless will end up back on the street after completing their treatment, repeating the

cycle.

Kaman said the city has been moving the chronically homeless into private rental units using vouchers, but the region's low vacancy rate makes that much more challenging.

That's part of the reason Everett is pushing ahead with a low-barrier permanent supportive housing project on city land. The project with Catholic Housing Services will house 65 chronically homeless people without first requiring they be addiction-free or deal with other issues. Residents will have access to mental health, recovery and other services and around-the-clock on-site staff.

Studies have found that such housing can save taxpayer money when compared to the costs of serving chronically homeless in emergency rooms, shelters and jails.

But so many chronically homeless people in the Everett region are on the waitlist for housing that those units will fill up when it opens in 2019.

"Housing is as, if not more, important than any medication" or other services, said Tom Sebastian, CEO of Compass Health, Snohomish County's largest behavioral health provider.

His agency is developing an 84-unit housing project for mentally ill and addicted homeless on a vacant lot in downtown Everett.

Compass Health doesn't typically develop housing, but "because there's that shortage, we feel a driving sense to step into that breach to do something to help solve that problem," Sebastian said.

For those who can get housing and services, stability can be a lifeline.

—

Finding solutions to homelessness is expensive. Voters in the city and county of Los Angeles since last year have passed a pair of ballot initiatives that will raise about \$4.7 billion over the next decade to pay for thousands of affordable housing units and homeless services.

In May, a nonprofit pledged \$100 million to help San Francisco cut its number of chronically homeless in half in five years by creating more permanent housing and increasing mental health services.

In Sacramento, where the number of people living on the streets has soared 116 percent over the past two years, the city and county last month agreed to spend tens of millions of dollars to coordinate services for those with mental illness and substance abuse problems. Steering them toward permanent housing is a cornerstone of the new effort.

And last month, King County, which includes Seattle, partnered with the Ballmer Group and others in a new program that will pay incentives to agencies that provide outpatient treatment on demand.

The hardcore homeless represent a major financial burden on Everett, putting pressure on the jail, emergency room and other services. In one extreme example, officials estimated one person used about \$500,000 in such resources in one year. Another homeless man spent 800 nights in jail over eight years for trespassing and other nuisance crimes.

Hard cases resist easy solutions, but Everett's team persists.

Teams try to serve people where they are — in streets, in the woods or under freeways. Volunteers with The Hand Up Project — many of whom are recently homeless and recovering addicts — have been hitting familiar haunts to find others who might be ready for recovery.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 King Co. considers changes to inquests</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://mynorthwest.com/843146/king-county-considers-how-it-handles-inquests-into-police-shootings/">http://mynorthwest.com/843146/king-county-considers-how-it-handles-inquests-into-police-shootings/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>King County could make changes to the way it handles inquests into shootings and other deaths at the hands of police.</p> <p>King County Executive Dow Constantine announced a new six-member committee Tuesday that will look at whether changes are needed.</p> <p>Among the possible changes are whether families of those killed by police should be provided lawyers using public money, as officers are, and whether those attorneys should have a larger role in presenting information to inquest juries.</p> <p>The committee could also look at whether having county prosecutors handle inquests is a conflict because they decide whether to charge officers in deadly force cases and defend the county against any lawsuits.</p> <p>Inquests don't determine criminal or civil liability, but almost always the six-member juries come up with conclusions seen as supportive of police. That's led to criticism.</p> <p>Among the members of the new six-member committee, Rick Williams, whose brother John T. Williams was shot and killed by a Seattle Police officer in 2010. A King County judge, retired sheriff's deputy, and the former civilian director of the Seattle Police Department's Office of Police Accountability are some of the other committee members.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 WA launches Maritime Advisory Council</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://maritime-executive.com/article/washington-state-launches-maritime-advisory-council">https://maritime-executive.com/article/washington-state-launches-maritime-advisory-council</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>At a meeting at the Bell Harbor Conference Center in Seattle on Tuesday, 20 maritime executives, government leaders and community representatives gathered to launch Washington's new Maritime Innovation Advisory Council, a coalition that will promote the sustainable development of the state's \$38 billion maritime industry.</p> <p>As its inaugural project, the council will conduct a one-year development strategy study in cooperation with DNV GL. The new study – "Washington Maritime Blue" – is funded by a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to Washington's Department of Commerce. The award is matched by an in-kind contribution from the Port of Seattle, which is providing space for the Washington Maritime Innovation Center, and from the University of Washington Applied Physics Lab, which is providing staff time.</p> <p>The formation of the new council makes Washington the latest port region to pursue a coordinated maritime development strategy, like Vancouver, Hamburg, Singapore, Hong Kong, Dubai and many others. In addition to business development, though, the study will look for ways to ensure that Washington is home to the most sustainable maritime industry by 2050, in line with Governor Jay Inslee's goal of deep de-carbonization.</p> <p>"Across the globe, maritime clusters are shaping developments that will set the future direction for a sustainable industry. The movement to de-carbonization and clean technology innovation is upon us, environmentally friendly fuels and electric propulsion are a reality, and digitalization is transforming the way we operate," said DNV GL group chief development officer David Walker in a keynote address. "Rather than view technology and innovation as simply tools to address the challenges we face in the maritime industry, we must instead work together to embrace the opportunities they offer for a sustainable and prosperous society."</p> <p>The group's advisory council is co-chaired by Frank Foti, CEO of Northwest shipbuilding powerhouse</p>

	<p>Vigor Industrial; Dennis McLerran, the former administrator of EPA Region 10; and Rep. Gael Tarleton of the Washington State Legislature. Other notable council members include John Wolfe, CEO of the Northwest Seaport Alliance, the cooperative joint venture of the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma; Commissioner Fred Felleman of the Port of Seattle; Vince O'Halloran of the AFL-CIO's Maritime Trades; John Dwyer, chief of the inspection division of Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound; and Paul Stevens, managing director and SVP of Saltchuk Resources, the parent company of Foss, AmNav, Young Brothers and TOTE.</p> <p>“Our industry works every single day to serve customers in a highly competitive environment, and it is not always easy to take the long view in such circumstances,” said Vigor CEO Frank Foti. “A successful strategy for a sustainable maritime industry will include identifying courageous and committed long-term investment that will allow the maritime industry to lead in a way that honors our precious environment, accelerates innovation and creates great opportunities for skilled workers.”</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 South Dakota state park wildfire spreads</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/12/12/wildfire-spreads-at-custer-state-park-in-south-dakota.html">http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/12/12/wildfire-spreads-at-custer-state-park-in-south-dakota.html</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>CUSTER, S.D. – A spreading wildfire has destroyed a building in Custer State Park in the Black Hills of South Dakota.</p> <p>Lydia Austin, a park spokeswoman, said Tuesday that the fire has grown to more than 4.6 square miles (11.9 square kilometers), from 4 square miles (10.4 sq. km) on Monday.</p> <p>Five homes in the park have been evacuated and one unused building was burned down. No one has been injured.</p> <p>The blaze is zero percent contained and about 200 firefighters are on the scene.</p> <p>The blaze erupted Monday during dry, warm weather. Austin says the cause is under investigation.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Intifada against US decision?</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/why-trump-s-provocative-jerusalem-move-hasn-t-sparked-uprising-n828656">https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/why-trump-s-provocative-jerusalem-move-hasn-t-sparked-uprising-n828656</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Less than a week after President Donald Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, Palestinian protests have largely fizzled out.</p> <p>Trump's move broke with decades of precedent and U.S. policy, sparked uproar among world leaders and triggered accusations that it jeopardized the prospects of Middle East peace.</p> <p>The announcement prompted the leader of the Islamic militant group Hamas to call for a new intifada — or uprising — against Israel. Hundreds of Israelis and Palestinians were killed in the last intifada in the early 2000s.</p> <p>But while the most recent protests, while sometimes violent, have appeared dramatic, there has been no sign of a sustained uprising since Trump revealed his plan last Wednesday.</p> <p>On Monday, fewer than 20 demonstrators gathered outside the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem and chanted pro-Palestinian slogans, but they were outnumbered by journalists.</p> <p>“Trump’s words were important, but they were still only words,” said Ian Black, a visiting senior fellow at the London School of Economics and author of “Enemies and Neighbors: Arabs and Jews in Palestine and</p>

Israel, 1917-2017.”

He added: "These have been fairly low-level clashes. It doesn't mean bad things can't happen and events can't get out of hand, but the appetite for a third intifada is quite small. There is a weariness and exhaustion. An uprising now will not help improve conditions in Gaza."

Some Palestinians also believe that their leaders' calls for an uprising are halfhearted.

“If you're calling for intifada and general uprising, that implies a willingness to risk everything, including the dissolution of the Palestinian Authority,” said Nathan Thrall, a senior analyst with the International Crisis Group, and the author of “The Only Language They Understand: Forcing Compromise in Israel and Palestine.”

He added, “You have leaders who are clearly not willing to do that, so when they call for protests and intifada, it's not interpreted to be sincere.”

Hamas isn't alone in pushing for a new intifada.

Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, last week also said he supported such calls. Hezbollah went to war with Israel in 2006.

On Monday, Nasrallah vowed that "Jerusalem and Palestine and the Palestinian people and the Palestinian resistance" would return as Hezbollah's "most important priority."

Iranian-backed Hezbollah was formed in the 1980s as a resistance movement against Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon, and they remain bitter enemies. The group has recently been focusing on fighting the Islamic State in Syria.

The U.S. has never endorsed Israel's claim of sovereignty over any part of Jerusalem. For Jews, Jerusalem is home to the religion's holiest site and is tied to its history as the location of the First and Second Temples. Israel views Jerusalem as its capital, and it is home to Israel's Parliament and Supreme Court.

The Palestinians have sought East Jerusalem, captured by Israel in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, as the capital of a future independent state.

The muted Palestinian reaction to Trump's announcement stands in contrast to demonstrations that rocked the region this past summer. Then, Palestinians took to the streets protesting Israel's decision to install metal detectors at the entrance to the third holiest site in Islam, the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

But analysts say those were largely led by the public. The calls for protests this time came from the Palestinian leadership.

“For a lot of Palestinians, the finer points of U.S. policymaking are not as relevant as the daily impact of the occupation,” said Hugh Lovatt, a policy fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations in the Middle East and North Africa program.

While recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, Trump signed a waiver pushing off the move of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem for at least six months, just as every other U.S. president has done since Congress passed the 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act. However, he announced plans to eventually move the diplomatic outpost — a process that aides have said could take years.

The State Department said specifics on sovereignty and the city's borders will still be decided in final status peace negotiations.

In the wider Arab world, conflicts in other parts of the Middle East, including in Yemen, Syria and Iraq, have captured the attention of Arab leaders. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia is preoccupied with its own power

	<p>struggle with Iran.</p> <p>Arab foreign ministers demanded on Sunday that the U.S. rescind the decision and vowed to seek a U.N. Security Council resolution rejecting the U.S. move, but did not include any punitive actions.</p> <p>Turkey on Tuesday also criticized what it said was a feeble Arab reaction to the U.S. decision.</p> <p>"Some Arab countries have shown very weak responses [on Jerusalem]," Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said. "It seems some countries are very timid of the United States."</p> <p>What's left to be resolved is the effect Trump's announcement will have on any efforts to revive the peace process.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Cold air headed to Northeast midweek</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/US/coldest-air-season-heading-northeast-midweek/story?id=51734351&amp;cid=clicksource_81_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed">http://abcnews.go.com/US/coldest-air-season-heading-northeast-midweek/story?id=51734351&amp;cid=clicksource_81_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Unsettled and cold weather is forecast for the Great Lakes and the Northeast through the rest of the week with several rounds of snow.</p> <p>A general 1 to 3 inches of snow fell in the Midwest and the Great Lakes from the Alberta Clipper system that moved through the area yesterday. Locally, more than 6 inches of snow fell due to the lake effect.</p> <p>Behind the storm system is the coldest air of the season for the East Coast of the U.S.</p> <p>Winter weather alerts are in place from Florida to Maine.</p> <p>The storm system is moving into the Northeast on Tuesday morning with snow and rain. Most of the major cities on the I-95 corridor should just see some rain.</p> <p>By Wednesday, the first clipper system exits the Northeast, but on its heels a new storm system will develop and approach the Great Lakes with more snow.</p> <p>By Thursday morning, this new system will move into the mid-Atlantic states and could bring some snow from West Virginia to Maryland and into Pennsylvania, New Jersey and maybe even New York City and Long Island. ABC News meteorologists are not expecting much snow with this second system, but a dusting to 1 inch of snow is possible.</p> <p>Over the next few days some areas from Michigan to western New York and New England could see up to 1 foot of snow.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Snohomish Co. outreach to homeless</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://mynorthwest.com/842374/snohomish-county-outreach-teams-in-see-all-the-negative-impacts-of-homelessness/">http://mynorthwest.com/842374/snohomish-county-outreach-teams-in-see-all-the-negative-impacts-of-homelessness/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>As the region struggles to deal with a homeless and opioid crisis, cities and counties are finding new ways to get those living on the streets the help they need.</p> <p>The homeless numbers in Snohomish County aren't quite as high as Seattle, but they're still significant and Snohomish County Sheriff Sgt. Ian Huri says they're seeing all the negative impacts that come with that.</p>

“Rape. We’ve had homicides involving homeless people. Overdoses; that’s by far the most common cause of death that we see. I can think of three people specifically in the past four months that have passed away from either the overdose itself or the infection from shooting up and getting an abscess that wasn’t treated properly and they pass away.”

Part of the county’s solution is embedded social worker outreach teams. The sheriff’s office now has three, two-member teams made up of a deputy and a social worker who do outreach to those living in encampments or elsewhere on the street.

“That’s our everyday job — going out and engaging people,” Sgt. Huri said. “Finding out what they need and getting them connected to it. Giving them rides to and from appointments. Getting them into housing. Whatever resources out there that we can utilize we try to take advantage of.”

Sgt. Huri is on one of the outreach teams, along with his social worker partner, Elisa Delgado.

“A lot of them are using heroin, a little bit of meth,” Delgado explained. “Occasionally there’s somebody out there that doesn’t really have the mental health or the chemical dependency. That’s rare though.”

Sgt. Huri says they find a few people who simply can’t afford housing, but most are dealing with addiction. And the county doesn’t think that means they belong in jail.

“Our main plan for most of the folks that are chemically dependent on the street right now is we get them an assessment to see what their treatment needs are. We get them into in-patient — typically about 30 days — then they qualify for a voucher program for up to six months of housing in a clean-and-sober home, which is contingent upon completion of intensive out-patient.”

Success is based on building relationships. The teams go out daily and talk to people on the street. They often encounter people they’ve run into before and tell them what they have to offer, including getting them into detox.

Sgt. Huri says a big key to success is follow up.

“We do not want any gaps between detox and treatment or treatment and housing. Some people choose not to take the housing up but for the people who want the housing, we don’t want them back on the street at all.”

Delgado says that means being there for them every step of the way. When a patient is finished with treatment, the teams begin looking for housing in a safe area that won’t be a “trigger.”

She says one of the biggest pieces of this program is the outreach teams being part of a person’s clean and sober network, even after they get into housing.

“Once they’re in housing, it isn’t, bye, see you later.”

And Sgt. Huri says they’re having success, placing more than 100 people in housing since the start of the program in late 2015.

“This year alone we’ve had over 100 people start the detox and treatment process,” he explained.

But they’re not all success stories.

“There are going to be people who no-show or leave detox the first hour they are there. Or they leave treatment a day before graduation. Those things happen...”

Huri admits this type of work wasn’t what he expected when he joined the sheriff’s office.

“If you had told me 10 years ago I would have said you’re crazy. But I’ve shared this with people, this is one of the most rewarding things I’ve ever done either professionally or personally.”

The Snohomish County Sheriff’s three embedded social worker teams cover unincorporated parts of the county, and cities such as Granite Falls and Darrington that don’t have their own police agencies. Everett Police are building a similar program. It’s catching on around the county, with Lynnwood and Arlington getting embedded social worker teams of heir own.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 America’s malls rotting away</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://money.cnn.com/2017/12/12/news/companies/mall-closing/index.html">http://money.cnn.com/2017/12/12/news/companies/mall-closing/index.html</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>The worst is yet to come for American shopping malls.</p> <p>As Macy's, JCPenney, Sears and other major department stores close their doors, the malls that housed those stores are facing a serious crisis.</p> <p>That's because when so-called anchor tenants leave a mall, it opens the door for other stores to break their leases or negotiate much cheaper rent.</p> <p>As one big store closes, it can take several smaller stores along with it like a house of cards. Experts predict that a quarter of American malls will close in five years -- around 300 out of 1,100 that currently exist.</p> <p>"When anchor stores close, it causes big problems for mall owners and other retailers in the mall," says Howard Davidowitz, chairman of New York-based retail consulting and investment banking firm Davidowitz &amp; Associates. "And I'd say this problem is only in its second inning."</p> <p>Retailers often sign co-tenancy agreements in their leases with malls, allowing them to reduce their rent or get out of a lease if a big store closes.</p> <p>That's because the smaller retailers next to anchor stores no longer benefit from the foot traffic that the major retailers received, according to Garrick Brown, vice president of retail research for Cushman &amp; Wakefield.</p> <p>Brown said he expects the weakest malls to enter "death spirals."</p> <p>Many former anchor tenants are closing hundreds of stores as Amazon (AMZN) eats their lunch.</p> <p>Sears (SHLD), which had operated nearly 3,800 stores as recently as a decade ago is now down to 1,104 stores. Macy's (M) closed 68 stores this year, and JCPenney (JCP) was set to shutter 128.</p> <p>It's not just department stores that have mall owners worried.</p> <p>When Starbucks (SBUX) announced that it was closing its Teavana tea line and wanted to shutter all of its stores, mall operator Simon Property Group (SPG) countered with a lawsuit. Simon cited in part the effect the store closures might have on other mall tenants.</p> <p>Earlier this month, a judge upheld Simons' suit, ordering Teavana to keep 77 of its stores open.</p> <p>Some successful malls may be able to survive if they can convert department stores' spaces into better attractions for consumers.</p> <p>Many big tenants were getting discounted rates on their leases, and malls may be able to charge higher rates to new tenants, according to Brown and Davidowitz.</p>



	<p>"There will be a new push to get food halls and entertainment in malls, and make it more of an experience that will draw people in," Brown says.</p> <p>However, even if new tenants can pay more for the space, smaller "specialty" stores can still break their leases if an anchor store leaves.</p> <p>It's also unlikely that underperforming malls will be able to attract crowds anyway.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Iran Guards: will back Palestinian forces</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-12-12/iran-guards-commander-says-ready-to-back-palestinian-forces">https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-12-12/iran-guards-commander-says-ready-to-back-palestinian-forces</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Iranian Revolutionary Guards commander Qassem Soleimani says his nation is ready to support Palestinian forces in the Gaza Strip, days after the U.S. recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital.</p> <p>Soleimani, commander of the Al Quds force, made the offer in a phone call late Monday with leaders of groups in Gaza, according to the Revolutionary Guard Corps' website, Sepah News, which didn't give details of the assistance proffered. Other forces in the region are ready to defend the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, Soleimani also told the Gaza faction leaders, without identifying them. The mosque is Islam's third-holiest shrine and a frequent flashpoint for tensions between Israel and the Palestinians.</p> <p>Palestinians claim Jerusalem's eastern sector, where the mosque stands, as the capital of a future state, and they oppose the U.S. move. Hamas has called for another uprising against Israel in response, though so far protests have been limited.</p> <p>Soleimani spoke a day after the head of Lebanon's Hezbollah movement, Hassan Nasrallah, called on all "resistance" groups in the region to come up with a unified strategy to take back Jerusalem. Iran's Quds force operates beyond the country's borders and has fought Islamic State in Iraq and backed President Bashar al-Assad in Syria. Iran also supports proxies such as Hezbollah and Hamas that have warred with Israel.</p> <p>In announcing his decision, Trump said the move would promote Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking. Robert Gates, a U.S. defense secretary in the administrations of former presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, disagreed.</p> <p>Trump's decision is "counter-productive to the administration's own objectives," Gates told Bloomberg News.</p> <p>"There was a sense this administration really thought it had a shot at making some real progress," he said in an interview in Dubai. This announcement "makes it much tougher to try and get any kind of political progress" between Israel and the Palestinians.</p> <p>Gates concurred with European and Arab leaders who say it is liable to fuel more conflict in the Middle East. The international community doesn't recognize Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem, whose eastern sector Israel captured in the 1967 Middle East war.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Report: WA in top-10 healthiest states</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://q13fox.com/2017/12/12/washington-ranks-among-top-10-healthiest-states-in-2017/">http://q13fox.com/2017/12/12/washington-ranks-among-top-10-healthiest-states-in-2017/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	Despite years of efforts to even out health disparities across the United States, some states are dramatically healthier than others, according to a new report.

Massachusetts, Hawaii, Vermont, Utah and Connecticut rank as the five healthiest states, while West Virginia, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi rank the least healthy in America's Health Rankings, according to the report by the United Health Foundation.

The rankings take into account a variety of health factors, such as rates of infectious diseases, obesity, physical inactivity, smoking and infant mortality, as well as air pollution levels and the availability of health care providers.

This is the first time Massachusetts has been named the healthiest state, ending Hawaii's five-year reign.

The Bay State won the honor in part due to having the lowest percentage of uninsured residents at just 2.7% of the population, plus a low prevalence of obesity and a high number of mental health providers.

Mississippi and Louisiana, ranked 49th and 50th, have major health challenges, according to the report, including a high prevalence of smoking, obesity and children in poverty.

"We don't have a system with everybody in," said Dr. Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association, which was not involved in the new report. "We're failing in our fundamental task to be a healthier nation."

The report, America's Health Rankings, has been analyzing state health standings for 28 years.

This latest report shows that the nation's health overall is getting worse.

The nation's premature death rate — the number of years of potential life lost before age 75 — increased 3% since 2015.

That increase is driven in part by drug deaths, which increased 7% during that time, and cardiovascular deaths, which went up 2%.

That leaves the United States ranking 27th in terms of life expectancy in a comparison of 35 countries, according to the report.

[Return to Top](#)

Click on source link to view graphic; illustrates Washington state as #10 on list

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 King Co. new shift fighting homelessness</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://q13fox.com/2017/12/12/king-county-program-helping-keep-people-from-becoming-homeless/">http://q13fox.com/2017/12/12/king-county-program-helping-keep-people-from-becoming-homeless/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>SEATTLE — A new shift in fighting the homeless crisis aims to slow the problem by stopping life on the street before it even starts.</p> <p>King County announced Tuesday that it helped more than 3,000 people stay in housing instead of falling into homelessness.</p> <p>County Executive Dow Constantine was joined by dozens of families for the one-year anniversary of the homeless prevention program funded by a voter levy.</p> <p>"We were homeless for a bit, sleeping in our car," said a woman named Adrina, flanked by her young son Antonio. She lost child support and a job, and faced domestic violence. She saw what was happening around her and reached out for help. Now she has housing. And a new job.</p> <p>"I've noticed such a positive turnaround for not only him, but myself," she said.</p> <p>Some of the program's initial \$4.1 million has gone to job interview training, transportation options to get</p>

there, some help with lagging utility payments and more.

It's about prevention, says case manager Tanya Robertson-Brooks.

“To get families and children before they cross over to that homelessness threshold,” she said.

Part of that includes rent help to avoid eviction. It's called stabilization. Robertson-Brooks said she has helped keep 30 clients' living situations secure.

But she said it underscores the serious need for more affordable housing, especially in south King County.

“So that families don't struggle once they do stabilize. Because it seems once they stabilize, then the rent's up,” she said.

Constantine and the county say these aren't just handouts though. If people get this assistance, they are very limited for other forms of aide.

It's an issue of accountability.

They say nearly one-quarter of people in the program have gotten no money at all. That could mean job assistance or negotiating with a landlord for free. Simple services that make a difference.

Constantine says the endless cycle of spending on shelters isn't an option anymore.

“This is a dramatically less expensive approach for the public, not even factoring the harm that's prevented,” he said.

[Return to Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Report: tech is most office jobs Seattle</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.seattlepi.com/business/tech/article/Report-Tech-makes-up-almost-all-new-office-jobs-12425349.php">http://www.seattlepi.com/business/tech/article/Report-Tech-makes-up-almost-all-new-office-jobs-12425349.php</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Seattle observers are well aware of the tech industry's role in the city's economic boom, but a new report takes it to a new level, finding that more than nine of every 10 office jobs created over the last two years came from the tech sector.</p> <p>The report by real estate firm CBRE, finds that Seattle tech firms added 23,575 jobs in 2015 and 2016, accounting for 93 percent of all office jobs in the city created during that time span. In raw numbers, Seattle also created more tech jobs than any other single market in the survey. However, Seattle ranked only eighth on the list overall. The ranking factored in a number of metrics including tech job growth and how fast office rents are rising.</p> <p>San Francisco came in at number one, followed by Charlotte and GeekWire HQ2winner Pittsburgh.</p> <p>Seattle has been buoyed by massive growth from hometown tech giant Amazon, which employed 541,900 people worldwide at the end of the last quarter, including more than 50,000 in Seattle. Additionally, more than 100 out-of-town tech companies have set up shop in the Seattle area. A few, like Facebook and Google, have become some of the top tech employers in the city.</p> <p>The report finds that high tech jobs focused on software and services employed 145,356 people in Seattle in 2016, or about 38.1 percent of office jobs. Tech companies in Seattle have a strong talent pool to pull from, as 45 percent of residents have a bachelor's degree or higher.</p> <p>Another area where Seattle stands alone is in its frothy office market. The report listed significant tech leases for each market, and F5 Network's move to lease the entirety of a new downtown Seattle office</p>

tower was the biggest deal spotlighted in the report. The report did not mention two big leases signed by Amazon for a striking new tower, and a large swath of space above the downtown Macy's.

Despite all these tech office deals, rents for tenants aren't rising as fast as other markets. Seattle came in 10th in office rent growth. The average asking rent for office space of \$32.45 per square foot is less than half of San Francisco's at \$72.90. Developers are active here: the 7 million square feet of new office space under construction in Seattle trails only New York and Silicon Valley.

All these figures point to Seattle as a more established tech market than some of the other top finishers in the report. In Pittsburgh, for example, tech accounted for a slightly higher percentage of new office jobs at 95 percent. But that only translated to 4,400 new jobs, or about one-sixth of Seattle's new tech jobs over the two-year period.

It also shows that the San Francisco Bay Area is still the top tech region in the country. The report separates San Francisco and Silicon Valley, diluting their numbers. Combined, the two markets accounted for more than 41,000 tech jobs over the two-year period, with more than 15 million square feet of office space under construction.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 NTSB report on El Faro maritime disaster</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/business/ntsb-captain-bad-safety-culture-at-seattle-firms-shipping-unit-to-blame-for-loss-of-el-faro/">https://www.seattletimes.com/business/ntsb-captain-bad-safety-culture-at-seattle-firms-shipping-unit-to-blame-for-loss-of-el-faro/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>A ship captain's unwillingness to listen to his crew's suggestions to change course from the path of a raging hurricane. A weak corporate safety culture. An old ship with outdated lifeboats, open to the elements.</p> <p>All these factors contributed to the sinking of the El Faro in the fury of Hurricane Joaquin on Oct. 1, 2015, which killed all 33 people on board, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) announced Tuesday. The board also criticized the "weak safety culture" of ship owner Tote Maritime, a unit of Seattle-based Saltchuk, including the lack of employee training for dealing with heavy weather situations and flooding.</p> <p>The report concludes a two-year investigation into one of the worst U.S. maritime disasters in modern history.</p> <p>The NTSB issued 53 safety recommendations along with its findings, which investigators hope will be adopted by the industry, maritime-safety inspectors and weather forecasters to make the seas safer.</p> <p>"I hope that this tragedy at sea can serve as a lighthouse to guide the safety of marine transportation," said NTSB chairman Robert Sumwalt.</p> <p>The El Faro, which means lighthouse in Spanish, sank between Jacksonville and San Juan, Puerto Rico, after losing engine power in the Category 3 storm. The NTSB retrieved the ship's voyage data recorder, or "black box," from the sea floor near the Bahamas, 15,000 feet under the surface. The device held 26 hours of data, including audio of conversations on the ship's bridge as the frantic crew struggled to save the ship and themselves.</p> <p>According to the NTSB, a hatch had been left open, allowing water from the roiling sea to flood an interior hold; this led to the ship's tilting, disrupting the flow of oil to the engines. Once the freighter lost engine power, it was at the mercy of battering swells.</p> <p>Also, the ship's wind gauge, called an anemometer, was broken and the 40-year-old freighter's open-top lifeboats would not have protected the crew, even if they had been able to launch them. The El Faro was legally allowed to carry lifeboats that expose people to the elements — just like the lifeboats on the Titanic</p>

	<p>and the Lusitania — because of exemptions for older ships.</p> <p>Tote has a Federal Way-based Alaska division, in addition to its Puerto Rico operations. Tote has about 1,300 employees and more than 20 vessels under its management, with revenues that exceed \$700 million per year, according to the Saltchuk website.</p> <p>In a statement Tuesday, Tote pointed to the complexity of the investigation and said it was looking forward to reviewing the final report.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 South Africa corruption scandal</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.foxnews.com/world/2017/12/13/global-firms-snared-in-south-africas-corruption-scandal.html">http://www.foxnews.com/world/2017/12/13/global-firms-snared-in-south-africas-corruption-scandal.html</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>JOHANNESBURG – South Africa's biggest corruption case since the end of apartheid has entangled not only the president and ruling party but also some major international companies, including U.S. firm McKinsey and KPMG.</p> <p>The scandal has weakened the ruling African National Congress, which meets this week to choose a new party leader who likely will be elected the country's next president in 2019.</p> <p>The allegations that have threatened to take down President Jacob Zuma and briefly sent the country into recession this year include illicit dealings with state-owned companies and other multinational firms, including German software giant SAP and British public relations company Bell Pottinger.</p> <p>The sprawling scandal centers on Zuma's close associates, the Gupta family of Indian immigrant businessmen, who are under investigation by a parliamentary committee for influencing Cabinet appointments.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Japan: 'ghost ship' washes ashore</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.cnn.com/2017/12/13/asia/ghost-ship-north-korea-niigata-japan/index.html">http://www.cnn.com/2017/12/13/asia/ghost-ship-north-korea-niigata-japan/index.html</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Tokyo (CNN)Another presumed North Korean vessel has washed up on Japan's shores, with at least one dead body on board.</p> <p>The wooden boat washed ashore at a beach on December 12, 2017 in Kashiwazaki, Niigata, Japan.</p> <p>The boat is the latest in a recent spate of so-called "ghost ships" drifting into Japanese waters from the reclusive North Asian nation, raising concerns about the country's deteriorating state in the face of international sanctions.</p> <p>The 10.7 meter (35 ft) long vessel was discovered on a beach in Kashiwazaki City, Niigata prefecture, early Tuesday morning, a Niigata police spokesman confirmed to CNN.</p> <p>A passerby found the wooden boat, which has numbers and Korean characters written on the bow.</p> <p>A police official said a male body, along with a badge bearing a picture of North Korean founder Kim Il Sung, was discovered in the boat.</p> <p>Another body was found about 650 meters (around 2100 ft) north from the boat, but the official would not confirm the body was from the presumed North Korean boat.</p> <p>He added that several bodies had washed up in the northwestern Japanese prefecture lately, including two</p>

	<p>bodies which were discovered on December 9.</p> <p>Separately, three bodies were found drifting near the beach in Fukaura, Aomori prefecture on Tuesday morning.</p> <p>The Coast Guard and police are investigating the identity of the three, and looking into any connection with the numerous drifting wooden boats found in the area.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Kremlin calls US allegations 'groundless'</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-security-kremlin/kremlin-calls-u-s-allegations-of-subversive-activity-groundless-idUSKBN1E711C">https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-security-kremlin/kremlin-calls-u-s-allegations-of-subversive-activity-groundless-idUSKBN1E711C</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>MOSCOW (Reuters) - The Kremlin said on Wednesday that U.S. allegations it was involved in a new generation of warfare, including internal political subversion, against the United States, were groundless and not backed by facts.</p> <p>White House national security adviser H.R. McMaster made the allegations on Tuesday.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Europe's aging energy networks</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-12-12/crack-and-explosion-show-risks-of-europe-s-aging-energy-networks">https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-12-12/crack-and-explosion-show-risks-of-europe-s-aging-energy-networks</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Just before 9 a.m. Tuesday, the gray skies over the far eastern reaches of Austria lit up with an explosion at a natural gas switching station, killing one worker, injuring almost two dozen others--and sending shockwaves through Europe's energy supply infrastructure.</p> <p>The blast in Baumgarten, a village about a mile from the border with Slovakia, generated a fireball so hot that it melted the plastic on cars parked half a kilometer away. With about 10 percent of Europe's gas needs passing through the station, the wholesale price of the fuel spiked by 23 percent, to its highest level in four years, as cold weather settled over much of the Continent.</p> <p>The Baumgarten explosion highlights the fragility of Europe's energy infrastructure. Hours earlier, a crack no wider than a hair and no longer than a hand shut down the Forties Pipeline System, a web of mostly undersea pipes that brings crude from platforms in the North Sea. And the Rough gas storage site--built to stockpile U.K. energy supplies--is being permanently decommissioned after deteriorating pipelines made it unsafe to operate.</p> <p>Most of Europe's gas infrastructure was built from the 1960s to the 1980s, as the Soviet Union began tapping Siberian fields to pump supplies westward in exchange for hard currency and production expanded in the North Sea. Like an old washing machine or refrigerator, those facilities require increasing levels of maintenance--just as rising demand for energy means they're seeing more wear and tear. With today's low commodity prices, replacing most of the equipment is out of the question. So repairs, and worries about dangerous incidents, will only become more commonplace.</p> <p>"Obviously, managing anything capital intensive is a challenge whether it's new or old," said James Drummond, a consultant at Lloyd's Register, an engineering advisory firm. "As it gets older, those challenges change and most likely do increase."</p> <p>While the oil and gas industry seeks to mitigate risk and taps new technologies to extend the useful life of equipment, the U.K. government says about half the oil and gas platforms in the North Sea have outlived their expected lifespans. And the European Union has concluded that the bloc's energy infrastructure isn't suited to fulfill future demand, with the gas and power networks needing 210 billion euros (\$247 billion)</p>

of investment.

The Forties system, begun in the 1970s, can carry some 500,000 barrels of crude a day from about 80 fields. Ineos AG, which operates the network, said the problems may have occurred because the pipeline abutted a rock. Others have said the nature of the issue--a crack rather than the more-typical corrosion--raises broader concerns about the pipeline.

The network "started in 1975, so clearly maintenance of the line is essential, you're going to find these issues," Ineos director Tom Crotty told Bloomberg Television. "We want to make this repair as quickly as we possibly can because we're losing a lot of money."

Dating to 1983, the Rough gas storage facility sits underground in a depleted oil reservoir, relying on a series of pipes to inject and withdraw gas stored for the winter. Steel casings designed to keep gas from leaking had deteriorated so much that Centrica Plc, the unit's operator, last year initiated a series of shutdowns for repairs.

Because Rough is the U.K.'s only long-term gas storage site, it had been deemed crucial to the country's energy security. But facing more than \$100 million in repair bills, Centrica this summer decided to close the facility for good.

In Baumgarten, emergency workers were still swarming the gas hub hours after the explosion. A police helicopter circled smoking debris. Fire engines continued to rush along the narrow road leading to the site nestled amid bucolic fields of grain. The fire superintendent at the area said he is still trying to understand what happened.

David Aron, founder of Petroleum Development Consultants in London, said the Baumgarten facility, which opened in 1959, is coming under increasing levels of stress. With the current cold weather across Europe, demand is surging as consumers crank up the thermostat, so the pumping station was likely reaching the limits of its capacity.

"Pipelines are always vulnerable; what we're dealing with here is explosive substances," Aron said. "At Baumgarten the pipelines are probably as pressurized as it can be, and they're huge."

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 UN: NKorea agrees w/point to prevent war</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2017/12/13/u-n-official-north-koreans-agree-importance-avoiding-war/947357001/">https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2017/12/13/u-n-official-north-koreans-agree-importance-avoiding-war/947357001/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>U.N. political affairs chief Jeffrey Feltman said on Tuesday that senior North Korean officials told him it was important to prevent war but they did not commit to talks.</p> <p>Feltmen met with North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho and Vice Minister Pak Myong Guk during a four-day visit to Pyongyang. It was the highest level U.N. visit to North Korea since 2011.</p> <p>"Time will tell what was the impact of our discussions, but I think we have left the door ajar and I fervently hope that the door to a negotiated solution will now be opened wide," Feltmen said after a closed door briefing at the U.N. Security Council.</p> <p>"They listened seriously to our arguments ... They did not offer any type of commitment to us at that point," said Feltman. "They agreed it was important to prevent war... How we do that was the topic of 15-plus hours of discussions."</p> <p>The former U.S. diplomat said the secretive state needed time to "digest and consider" and that he believed Ri would brief North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.</p>

	<p>Feltman said he requested North Korea consider "talks about talks" and possibly open up "technical channels of communication, such as the military-to-military hotline, to reduce risks, to signal intentions, to prevent misunderstandings and manage any crisis."</p> <p>In an apparent reversal of policy, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said Tuesday that the United States was willing to engage in talks with North Korea without preconditions.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Israel strikes back at Hamas in Gaza</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/israel-hits-hamas-gaza-rocket-fire-israeli-city-51758048?">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/israel-hits-hamas-gaza-rocket-fire-israeli-city-51758048?</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>The Israeli military says it has carried out airstrikes in Gaza in response to rocket fire toward southern Israel.</p> <p>The military says it struck a Hamas military compound in southern Gaza early on Wednesday. No casualties were reported.</p> <p>The strike followed a rocket fired late Tuesday toward Israel's southern coastal city of Ashkelon. It was intercepted by the anti-missile Iron Dome defense system.</p> <p>Israel typically responds to each Gaza attack and holds Hamas responsible, regardless of which group fired. The area has been largely calm since the 2015 Israel-Hamas war.</p> <p>Palestinian militants have fired several rockets at Israel in recent days, sparking an uptick in Israeli retaliation. Two Hamas militants and two demonstrators were killed over the weekend.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Another large quake jolts southern Iran</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iranian-media-quake-magnitude-61-hits-south-51758921?">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iranian-media-quake-magnitude-61-hits-south-51758921?</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Iranian media say another earthquake has jolted the country's south, followed by several aftershocks.</p> <p>The semi-official ISNA news agency says the magnitude 6.1 temblor rocked the village of Hajdak in the southern province of Kerman in the early hours on Wednesday, about 700 kilometers, or 400 miles, south of Tehran.</p> <p>ISNA says the quake's depth was 10 kilometers, or 6.2 miles, and that 58 people were injured as they ran out of their homes. It says the area was jolted by several aftershocks, ranging in magnitude from 4 to 5.1.</p> <p>In November, a 7.2 magnitude quake hit western Iran, killing more than 600 people.</p> <p>Iran sits on major fault lines and has near-daily quakes. In 2003, a 6.6 magnitude quake flattened the historic city of Bam, killing 26,000 people.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Islamic summit seeks to counter US move</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/islamic-nations-seek-response-trumps-move-jerusalem-51758285">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/islamic-nations-seek-response-trumps-move-jerusalem-51758285</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Leaders and top officials from Islamic nations gathered in Turkey on Wednesday for a summit that is expected to forge a unified stance against President Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital.</p>



of Israel.

The summit of the 57-member Organization of Islamic Cooperation could also offer the Muslim world's strongest response yet to Washington's move. Turkey, the summit host, has sharply criticized what it described as weak Arab response so far on the issue of contested Jerusalem.

Turkey has also called for other countries to recognize a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Jerusalem's status is at the core of the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Trump's Dec. 6 announcement was widely perceived as siding with Israel. It also raised fears of more bloodshed as past crises over Jerusalem had triggered violent outbreaks.

Turkey, which currently heads the OIC, called for the Istanbul summit — Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been among the most vocal critic of Trump's announcement.

In opening remarks Wednesday to a pre-summit meeting, Turkey's foreign minister, Mevlut Cavusoglu, said the OIC nations "are here to say 'stop' to tyranny."

He told OIC foreign ministers that the U.S. decision aims to "legitimize Israel's attempt to occupy Jerusalem."

"They expect the Islamic nation to remain silent," he said. "But we will never be silent. This bullying eliminates the possibility of peace and the grounds for shared life. The U.S.' decision is null for us.

"We, who recognize east Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, should encourage other countries to recognize the Palestinian state within the foundation of the 1967 borders and the capital as East Jerusalem," Cavusoglu said.

Most countries around the world have not recognized Israel's 1967 annexation of east Jerusalem. Under a long-standing international consensus, the fate of the city is to be determined in negotiations.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 China: Nanking massacre outreach</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/china-marks-nanking-massacres-80th-anniversary-51757382?">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/china-marks-nanking-massacres-80th-anniversary-51757382?</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Chinese officials struck a tempered tone on the 80th anniversary of the Nanking Massacre on Wednesday, saying China would "look forward" and deepen friendship with its neighbor Japan despite historical misgivings.</p> <p>Chinese President Xi Jinping led a citywide minute of silence but did not speak as Yu Zhengsheng, head of China's parliamentary advisory body, urged China and Japan to draw lessons from history and look forward to the future.</p> <p>China has frequently criticized Japan for not showing sufficient contrition for the brutality of its expansionist campaign that swept across Asia during the first half of the 20th century.</p> <p>China's government and a 1946 international postwar tribunal say at least 200,000 civilians were killed by Japanese troops entering China's then capital in December 1937 following bitter street fighting in Shanghai.</p> <p>Some right-wing Japanese politicians, including Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, have downplayed the death toll or denied outright that the Nanking atrocity even happened.</p>

Wearing a white flower on his lapel, Xi watched somberly on Wednesday as Chinese soldiers bearing large funeral wreaths marched slowly past a memorial showing the figure 300,000 — the number of massacre victims, according to official Chinese estimates.

Denial by conservative Japanese quarters of the country's wartime history has frequently incensed neighbors that bore the brunt of its militarism and colonial rule, including China, South Korea and the Philippines, and it continues to fuel debate in contemporary Japan.

A Japanese hotel chain attracted condemnation in January when it distributed a book questioning Japan's use of forced sex workers and calling the Nanking Massacre a fake. Nanking, an ancient Chinese capital 320 kilometers (200 miles) west of Shanghai, is now commonly known as Nanjing.

China's ruling Communist Party, particularly under Xi, has often stoked nationalism and allowed anti-Japanese sentiment to build. But relations have improved in recent months, with Xi and Abe posing together with smiles and pledging to seek a "fresh start" at a November summit in Vietnam.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Abbas: no US role Mideast peace process</b>
-----------------	--

<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/latest-turkeys-erdogan-israel-terror-state-51759522">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/latest-turkeys-erdogan-israel-terror-state-51759522</a>
---------------	---

<b>GIST</b>	The Latest on the gathering of Islamic nations seeking a united stance against the Trump administration's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital (all times local):
-------------	---

12:20 p.m.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas says the Palestinians won't accept any role for the United States in a peace process with Israel "from now on" after the Trump administration's decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish state.

Abbas says President Donald Trump's decision was a "crime" that threatens world peace. He says there will be no peace in the region if the world doesn't recognize east Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state.

The Palestinian leader spoke on Wednesday at a summit of Islamic nations hosted by Turkey.

He says the international community has nearly unanimously opposed Trump's decision, calling it a "provocation" to Muslim and Christian sentiments and saying measures are needed to protect the identity of the divided city.

\_\_\_\_\_

12:10 p.m.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has sharply criticized Israel at the opening of a summit of Islamic nations in Istanbul, calling it a "terror state."

Turkey is hosting the 57-member Organization of Islamic Cooperation on Wednesday in the wake of the U.S. decision to recognize Jerusalem as its capital — a move widely criticized across the world but hailed by Israel. The summit is expected to forge a unified position of Arab and Muslim countries.

Erdogan said in his speech to the gathering that Jerusalem is a "red line" for Muslims who will not accept any aggression on its Islamic sanctuaries. He said East Jerusalem is the capital of a future Palestinian state and called on states that have not recognized a Palestinian state to do so.

Erdogan says the "process to include Palestine in international agreements and institutions should be sped

	up."
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Opioid crisis straining foster system</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/americas-heroin-epidemic/opioid-crisis-strains-foster-system-kids-pried-homes-n828831">https://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/americas-heroin-epidemic/opioid-crisis-strains-foster-system-kids-pried-homes-n828831</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>INDIANAPOLIS — The case arrives with all the routine of a traffic citation: A baby boy, just 4 days old and exposed to heroin in his mother's womb, is shuddering through withdrawal in intensive care, his fate now being determined here in a shabby courthouse that hosts a parade of human misery.</p> <p>The parents nod off as Judge Marilyn Moores explains the legal process, and tests arrive back showing both continue to use heroin. The judge briefly chastises, a grandmother sobs, and by the time the hearing is over, yet another child is left in the arms of strangers because of his parents' addiction.</p> <p>There is little surprise in any of this, for it's become a persistent presence at Indianapolis' juvenile court. A Monday with a heroin-dependent newborn spills into a Tuesday in which a trembling mother admits breaking her 70-day clean streak with a four-day bender. A Wednesday with two children found in a car beside a mother passed out on pills fades into a Thursday with a teen who found both his mother and grandmother overdosed on heroin.</p> <p>Across the U.S., soaring use of opioids has forced tens of thousands of children from their homes, creating a generation of kids abandoned by addicted parents, orphaned because of fatal overdoses or torn from fractured families by authorities fearful of leaving them in drug-addled chaos.</p> <p>"This isn't a trickle. This isn't a wave. It's a tsunami," Moores said of a child welfare system grappling with an unprecedented crush of parental drug cases.</p> <p>From her first full year on the bench in 2006 through last year, the number of filings for children in need of services more than tripled to 4,649 in Marion County, driven largely by cases involving opioids — a glimpse of a problem that has swept across communities of all sizes.</p> <p>Behind each of those cases is a child subjected to the realities of life amid addiction — of barren fridges, unwelcome visitors and parents who couldn't be roused awake. Moores is still haunted by the story of a 2-year-old found alone at home with his father's corpse, a needle still poking from his arm. A neighbor was drawn in by the boy's relentless wails.</p> <p>By Friday, the largest pile of cases on Moores' desk has reached a towering two feet, and she has plodded on in bureaucratic fights to get more judges, more court reporters and more mediators to deal with work in which the despair dwarfs the fleeting moments of hope.</p> <p>"It seems like there's a whole generation of people disappearing," Moores said.</p> <p>As opioids have thrived, children have suffered. And families are being torn apart, again and again.</p> <p>New foster care cases involving parents who are using drugs have hit the highest point in more than three decades of record-keeping, accounting for 92,000 children entering the system in 2016, according to just-released data by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.</p> <p>The crisis is so severe — with a 32 percent spike in drug-related cases from 2012 to 2016 — it reversed a trend that had the foster care system shrinking in size over the preceding decade. All told, about 274,000 children entered foster care in the U.S. last year. A total of 437,000 children were in the system as of Sept. 30, 2016.</p> <p>Though substance abuse has long been an issue for child welfare officials, this is the most prolific wave of</p>

children affected by addiction since crack cocaine use surged in the 1980s, and experts said opioid-use is driving the increase.

Among the states with the biggest one-year increases in their foster care population were Georgia, West Virginia and Indiana.

"It's been an overburdening of our system," said Cindy Booth, executive director of Child Advocates of Marion County, which represents kids at the center of drug cases.

The Associated Press delved further into the troubling numbers, examining county-level foster care statistics obtained from the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect through the end of 2015. The analysis showed counties with higher levels of opioid prescribing and opioid deaths also had higher shares of foster cases linked to drugs. Last year's county-level statistics are not yet available.

The data show that foster children of drug users are on average about three years younger than others in the system. Indeed, a wave of babies born to opioid-using mothers has led hospitals to add detox programs for pregnant women and save umbilical cords in case they need to pinpoint what drug an infant was exposed to. Volunteers are enlisted to cuddle heroin-dependent babies — often born premature and underweight with a distinctive high-pitched cry and tremors in their arms and legs.

In Indiana, drug-related foster cases shot up more than sixfold between 2000 and 2015. Vanderburgh County, with a population of 179,000, had more children of drug users enter foster care than major cities including Seattle, Miami and Las Vegas. And here in Marion County, cases involving drugs went from about 20 percent of foster children in 2010 to 50 percent five years later.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Massive Calif. wildfire still growing</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.cbsnews.com/news/southern-california-thomas-fire-crews-protect-hillside-homes-today-updates/">https://www.cbsnews.com/news/southern-california-thomas-fire-crews-protect-hillside-homes-today-updates/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>LOS ANGELES -- The fifth largest wildfire in California history expanded, ripping through dry brush atop a coastal ridge while crews struggled to keep flames from roaring down into neighborhoods amid fears of renewed winds. CBS Los Angeles reports the Thomas Fire continued to burn across 234,200 acres Tuesday and remained at 20 percent containment.</p> <p>The blaze has destroyed more than 680 homes, officials said. It has burned more than 360 square miles of dry brush and timber, and has been burning for more than a week.</p> <p>Firefighters protected foothill homes northwest of Los Angeles, making progress in residential areas while much of the fire's growth occurred to the north in unoccupied forest land, Santa Barbara County Fire Department spokesman Mike Eliason said Tuesday.</p> <p>"There were a couple of flare-ups in the hills that put on a light show last night, but they were expected. For now the teams are fighting the fire on their own terms," he said, adding that shifting winds are always a danger.</p> <p>Red Flag warnings for fire danger due to Santa Ana winds and a critical lack of moisture were extended into the week instead of expiring Monday afternoon as was initially forecast.</p> <p>"It doesn't get much drier than this folks," the National Weather Service tweeted, adding that more than 80 observation sites in the region reported Monday relative humidity levels between just 1 and 9 percent.</p> <p>Tens of thousands of people remain evacuated, including many from the seaside enclaves of Montecito, Summerland and Carpinteria and the inland agricultural town of Fillmore.</p>

	<p>To the north, San Francisco Bay Area firefighters quickly contained blazes Tuesday that destroyed at least two homes in hills east of Oakland — the site of a 1991 firestorm that killed 25 people.</p> <p>Santa Ana winds have long contributed to some of the region's most disastrous wildfires. They blow from the inland toward the Pacific Ocean, speeding up as they squeeze through mountain passes and canyons.</p> <p>The weather service said that if the long-term forecast holds, there will have been 13 consecutive days of dry offshore flow before it ends Friday afternoon. There have only been 17 longer streaks since 1948, including the record of 24 days set between December 1953 and January 1954.</p> <p>High fire risk is expected to last into January.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Officials: homeless camp fire caused wildfire</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-skirball-fire-cause-20171212-story.html">http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-skirball-fire-cause-20171212-story.html</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>The fire that destroyed six homes and damaged a dozen others in Bel-Air last week was caused by a cooking fire at a nearby homeless encampment, Los Angeles fire officials said Tuesday.</p> <p>For a “number of years,” homeless people had been living in a camp along Sepulveda Boulevard where it passes under the 405 Freeway, Los Angeles Fire Department spokesman Peter Sanders said.</p> <p>Investigators who inspected the encampment found evidence that people had been cooking and sleeping in the area but did not find anyone there, Sanders said. The department has no suspects, he said.</p> <p>Los Angeles has been struggling in recent years with a major uptick in the homeless population, with encampments spreading out from downtown L.A. into neighborhoods across the city. A report in May put the homeless population in Los Angeles County at 58,000, a 23% increase over the last year.</p> <p>The count found that the homeless population in the West L.A. service area — which included the Bel-Air and Brentwood neighborhoods — increased from 4,659 to 5,511 in that period.</p> <p>The National Park Service estimates that 90% of wildfires across the U.S. are caused by humans.</p> <p>The Skirball fire erupted early Wednesday, eating down the chaparral-covered hillsides next to the 405, forcing the closure of the important artery at rush hour.</p> <p>In less than a day, the blaze ate through more than 400 acres in Bel-Air. Six homes were destroyed and a dozen more were damaged on Moraga Drive, Casiano Road and Linda Flora Drive. The blaze forced the evacuations of a large swath of the neighborhood, which is one of the most affluent in the country.</p> <p>The Skirball fire was 85% contained Tuesday, with 69 firefighters still working to mop up the operation, officials said.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

## Cyber Awareness

[Top of page](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Arrest following posted threats to cop</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.kitsapsun.com/story/news/2017/12/12/kent-man-arrested-after-anti-law-enforcement-facebook-comments/943203001/">http://www.kitsapsun.com/story/news/2017/12/12/kent-man-arrested-after-anti-law-enforcement-facebook-comments/943203001/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>PORT ORCHARD — A Kent man who on Thursday evening posted allegedly threatening comments on the Kitsap Sun’s Facebook page about a former Kitsap County Sheriff’s deputy — recently cleared by a federal jury of using excessive force — was arrested the next day by Kitsap County Sheriff’s deputies.</p>

Michael Charles Martin, 27, was charged Monday in Kitsap County Superior Court with felony harassment and is being held on \$50,000 bail in the Kitsap County Jail. His bail was initially set at \$250,000.

Former Deputy Matthew Hill, the subject of the story posted Dec. 7 on the Kitsap Sun's Facebook page, was sued in U.S. District Court for a 2014 incident where he entered a house and subdued the wrong man while pursuing a suspect in a high-speed chase. The man Hill subdued, Frank Fuller, sued Hill and the Sheriff's Office. A jury found on Dec. 1 that Hill had not used excessive force. Hill left his position in 2016 due to injuries sustained in the line of duty, according to the Sheriff's Office.

The Facebook comments attributed to Martin, which were critical of law enforcement's actions in the Fuller matter, said: "He's a terrorist, and should be executed." The comments attributed to Martin also said: "His name is Matthew Hill" and asks "What is his address?"

When another commenter questioned why he wanted Hill's address, Martin allegedly wrote: "So I know where to stay away from, of course." The comments then read: "Or maybe I can get a shiny badge, break into his house and get away with assaulting and kidnapping him?"

Hill told deputies he felt "threatened and terrified" for his and his family's safety, according to charging documents.

A meme also posted on the Kitsap Sun's Facebook page under Martin's account, and included in court documents, suggested: "The only good cop is a dead cop." The words were placed on a photo believed to be of the casket of Washington State Patrol Trooper Tony Radulescu, according to documents. In 2012 Radulescu was shot and killed while on patrol in Kitsap County. Above the meme, Martin allegedly wrote: "This cop should be put down."

After detectives tracked down Martin through "investigative resources," one detective asked Martin about the posts, "If he meant anything by them." The detective quoted Martin saying: "I did not mean anything" and he thought it was ridiculous. Martin then asked for an attorney and was placed under arrest.

Martin's Facebook profile shows a number of anti-government and anti-law enforcement posts and photos, according to court documents, along with images associated with "anarchist capitalist" ideology such as the phrase "taxation is theft."

Investigators wrote Martin had "a history of assaultive behavior," saying he has been accused of making threats with a knife on a bus in King County as well as a road rage incident where Martin threatened to shoot a woman and pounded on the hood of her vehicle.

Deputy Scott Wilson, a spokesman for the office, said there was no conflict of interest in having Hill's former agency investigate the posts as Hill no longer worked for the Sheriff's Office.

Wilson said deputies investigate cases of online comments, but it was the "totality of circumstances" that led to Martin's arrest. Wilson listed Martin's criminal history as given in court documents, the anti-law enforcement and anti-government posts on Martin's Facebook account as well as the hostile comments themselves and the effect they had on Hill.

"We made the decision this was a credible threat and we had to act accordingly and check it out," Wilson said, noting that deputies had consulted with prosecutors before contacting Martin. "This was not done just as a knee-jerk reaction."

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

**SOURCE**

<https://www.natlawreview.com/article/blockchain-and-privacy>

**GIST**

Discussions about “blockchain” technology seem to be everywhere these days, with potential applications spanning industries as diverse as banking, healthcare, real estate, law enforcement, entertainment, and even wine and jewelry sales. Different applications of blockchain present different and unique challenges and opportunities for data security and privacy, but there are three general categories currently preoccupying legal privacy experts. The first involves the necessary bridge between the physical-cyberspace boundary; the second involves sensitive information actually stored on the blockchain; and the third involves the very existence of blockchains themselves.

**What is Blockchain?**

Blockchain is, at its core, a distributed ledger for storing information about transactions. With blockchain, instead of inputting and storing transactional information in some central location (for example, logging a real estate transaction in a central ledger at City Hall), the transaction is uploaded and stored as a “block” of information on thousands of different computers, or “nodes,” located around the world. Subsequent transactions can be input as a new block into any node and, once the new transaction is verified (using a complicated process beyond the scope of this post), the new block is added to the existing blocks on all other nodes housing the information for the original transaction, creating identical “chains” of information inextricably linking the transactions back to the initial block of information, or “genesis block.”

A blockchain network can be public, meaning any computer can function as a node, or it can be private, meaning only certain approved computers are allowed access. The network can be governed by a strong central authority, a weak central authority, or no central authority at all. Meanwhile, the data in the blocks can be public, meaning anyone can see it by looking at the information stored on a node, or encrypted, so that the nodes can all verify that the information contained at each node is identical, but only those with a key can access the information in a readable format. Each of these options provides tradeoffs between security, privacy, speed, and functionality, and different applications will require different blockchain networks to function depending on the particular requirements of each application.

**Privacy Issue #1: Physical-Cyberspace Boundary**

The “physical-cyberspace boundary” refers to the concept that when a flesh-and-blood person interacts in cyberspace, they do so through an “online identifier.” For example, if you want to interact with users on Facebook, you need to create a username and log on so Facebook’s network knows who you are. The same is true for any online interaction, whether its banking, buying concert tickets or downloading music – in order to take part in a transaction, there needs to be some connection established between you and your online identifier. The identifier can be pseudo-anonymous (e.g. a bank account or e-mail address that doesn’t have a real name attached to it), but at some point, there must be some bridge of the physical-cyberspace boundary. Currently, this bridge is accomplished primarily through username and password combinations, sometimes with the addition of multi-factor authentication procedures. In the near future however, it is likely that biometric identifiers will replace usernames and passwords as the means of crossing the physical-cyberspace boundary.

One issue with this system is that, in order for a physical person to be able to log into a network, the network needs to have a copy of that person’s login credentials paired with that person’s online identifier. In a centralized system, those credentials only need to be stored in one place (e.g. on the central servers of Facebook or your bank). In a blockchain network, those credentials would be stored on all of the nodes containing the blockchains you want to interact with, some of which may be more easily compromised than a secure central server.

This is particularly concerning when it comes to biometric identifiers, which, once compromised by identity thieves, are not easily changed. Compounding this concern is the fact that, as will be discussed below, the nature of a blockchain means that all information stored on a blockchain stays stored as additional blocks are added to the chain, meaning sensitive personal information may be stored in cyberspace forever.

Another issue is that, absent a strong central authority, it can be difficult to prevent hackers from accessing sensitive information once a person’s login credentials are compromised. For example, if someone hacks

your bank account or steals your credit card information, you can call your bank and update your login information or cancel your old credit card. In a blockchain network with no strong central authority, it can be difficult to update your login credentials, and even possible for a hacker to lock you out by updating the credential once they have access.

Not only is the potential for hacking of this sensitive information problematic from a security standpoint, but it also creates uncertainty concerning who, if anyone, is responsible for notifying individuals if their login credentials are compromised. Most states have passed data breach notification laws which require the custodians of personally identifiable information (“PII”) notify the owners of PII if their PII is compromised. At this point it is unclear how these laws will be applied to a distributed network like blockchain, or if they are even applicable as written.

### **Privacy Issue #2: Information Stored on, and Inferred from, the Blockchain**

Some of the data which will be stored on blockchains will be particularly sensitive – blockchain networks are currently being explored as means of recording and updating healthcare records, genomic sequences and biometric credentials (as discussed above). While any sensitive information stored on the blockchain will (as a best practice) be encrypted, because of the distributed nature of the blockchain, hackers may target those specific nodes that, for one technical reason or another, can be more easily compromised to access the encrypted information, or where the laws are inadequate to prevent such hacking. This concern is compounded when it comes to government-employed hackers, who may take advantage of the physical location of nodes in countries where information is more easily hacked, or where the laws are inadequate to prevent such hacking. While privacy risks can be mitigated by operating in closed networks, there are benefits to open networks that will require at least some blockchains containing sensitive information to be operated in less than fully closed networks.

Another concern with open networks is that, even if the information itself is encrypted, sensitive information can be gleaned from the fact that transactions are taking place at all. For example, if two large banks engage in a high volume of transactions with each other in a short period of time, information can be extrapolated from that information by other banks or private individuals who can see the transactions occurring, even if they can’t see the details of the transactions themselves. On a more personal level, if a doctor accesses a patient’s health records to make changes, a hacker may be able to see that transaction if they know the online identifiers of the doctor and the patient. While the hacker won’t be able to see the health records or what was changed without accessing and decrypting the records, they can at the very least infer that the patient saw a particular doctor on a particular date, information which a patient might wish to keep private.

Equally problematic is the fact that, at this point, it is unclear who, if anyone might be legally liable in the event this information is accessed and harm results to the owner of the information, or to a third party as a result of unauthorized use of the information.

### **Privacy Issue #3: Nature of the Blockchain – Eternal Records**

One of the great challenges facing privacy in the 21st century is the situation created by the combined advances in data retention, data cataloging and data search capabilities. As we create more and more data about our lives, and as that data is catalogued and made easily searchable, that data becomes eternal and visible to the general public in a way it has never been before. Blockchain technology is likely to accelerate this trend. One of the as-advertised benefits of blockchain is that it records all transactions back to the genesis block, allowing for near-perfect record keeping. As the types of transactions stored on blockchains increase, so will eternal records of every one of those transactions. In the future, it is possible that every transaction you engage in will be stored on a blockchain, and you will have no control over where that information is stored or how it is used, and no way to have it deleted.

The privacy concerns (and laws) implicated by these eternal records are numerous. For starters, the simple fact that such records exist could pose issues for anyone who doesn’t want a complete record of all of their transactions to exist for all time. Furthermore, at this time there is no clear agreement as to who “owns” the information contained in these records as a legal matter. It is possible that blockchain networks would be able to sell the information contained in these records without any input from the individuals who



engaged in the transactions, and those individuals would have no recourse. In the absence of clear rules of ownership, it may also be possible for government entities and private citizens to access this data without the consent of the individuals involved in the transaction. In blockchains with a weak or no central authority, bad data that makes its way into the chain may be impossible to correct.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Iranian cyber threat continues to develop</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/following-the-developing-iranian-cyberthreat/">https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/following-the-developing-iranian-cyberthreat/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Iran is one of the leading cyberspace adversaries of the United States. It emerged as a cyberthreat a few years later than Russia and China and has so far demonstrated less skill. Nevertheless, it has conducted several highly damaging cyberattacks and become a major threat that will only get worse.</p> <p>Like Russia and China, the history of Iran’s cyberspace operations begins with its hackers. But unlike these other countries, Iran openly encourages its hackers to launch cyberattacks against its enemies. The government not only recruits hackers into its cyberforces but supports their independent operations.</p> <p>It was clear by the mid-2000s that Iran would become a source of cyberattacks: Its hackers had started taking over websites worldwide and posting their own messages on them, a practice called “defacing.” Often it was just for fun, but some hackers wanted to stand up for their country and Muslims. One prominent group, Iran Hackers Sabotage, launched in 2004 “with the aim of showing the world that Iranian hackers have something to say in the worldwide security.”</p> <p>The group’s website announced that it provided vulnerability testing and secure hosting services, but it was also known for web defacements. In 2005, the group replaced the U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo home page with one defending Muslims and condemning terrorists. Another of its defacements proclaimed “Atomic energy is our right.” By early 2008, the Zone-H defacement archive listed 3,763 web defacements for the group. The group has since disbanded.</p> <p>Another prominent group, Ashiyane Digital Security Team, ran a website that offered free hacking tools and tutorials. The site claimed to have 11,503 members in May 2006. Like Iran Hackers Sabotage, Ashiyane provided security services while using its members’ knowledge and skills to deface websites. Their defacements frequently included a map of Iran with a reminder that “The correct name is Persian Gulf” for what some Arab states have called the “Arabian Gulf.”</p> <p>Ashiyane defaced 500 websites in 2009 during the Israeli incursion into Gaza and 1,000 sites in the U.S., U.K. and France in 2010 for supporting what the group said were anti-Iranian terrorist groups. By May 2011, Zone-H had recorded 23,532 defacements by the group. Its leader, Behrouz Kamalian, said his group cooperated with the Iranian military, but operated independently and spontaneously.</p> <p>A third group, the Iranian Cyber Army, launched a few years later. It has been implicated in several website attacks, including one against Twitter in 2009 that proclaimed support for Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Other attack targets were the Voice of America in 2011 after the U.S. supported Iran’s Green movement, and regime opposition websites in 2013 just before the presidential election.</p> <p>The Iranian Cyber Army is said by some cybersecurity researchers to operate on behalf of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, a branch of the country’s military. The Revolutionary Guards runs a cyber warfare program that in 2008 was estimated to employ about 2,400 professionals. In addition, it connects with independent hacker groups such as Ashiyane and the ICA.</p> <p>The Revolutionary Guards also command Iran’s voluntary paramilitary militia, known as the Basij Resistance Force. In 2010, the Basij established the Basij Cyber Council, but it focuses more on media and influence operations than on cyberattacks.</p> <p>By 2012, Iranian cyberattacks had gone beyond simple web defacements and hijacks to ones that</p>

destroyed data and shut down access to critical websites. The attackers conceal their government connections by hiding behind monikers that resemble those used by independent hacktivists fighting for justice and human rights.

One such group called itself the Cutting Sword of Justice. In 2012, it launched cyberattacks against the Saudi Aramco oil company, claiming to protest Saudi oppression and corruption financed by oil. The attacks used “wiper” code that overwrote data on hard drives and spread through the company’s network via a virus dubbed Shamoon. More than 30,000 computers were rendered inoperable at Saudi Aramco and Qatar’s RasGas, which was also targeted. U.S. intelligence officials blamed Iran for the attacks.

Iran has deployed wiper malware in other acts of sabotage, most notably the 2014 attack against the Las Vegas Sands Corporation. The attack was thought to be a response to remarks made by Sheldon Adelson, the company’s largest shareholder. Adelson suggested setting off a bomb in an Iranian desert to persuade the country to abandon nuclear weapons. And in 2016, the Shamoon malware resurfaced, wiping data from thousands of computers in Saudi Arabia’s civil aviation agency and other organizations.

Iranian hackers operating on behalf of the government have also conducted massive distributed denial-of-service attacks, which flood sites with so much traffic that they become inaccessible. From 2012 to 2013, a group calling itself the Cyber Fighters of Izz ad-Din al-Qassam launched a series of relentless distributed denial-of-service attacks against major U.S. banks. The attackers claimed the banks were “properties of American-Zionist Capitalists.”

In 2016 the U.S. indicted seven Iranian hackers in absentia for working on behalf of the Revolutionary Guards to conduct those bank attacks, which were said to have caused tens of millions of dollars in losses. The motivation may have been retaliation for economic sanctions that had been imposed on Iran or the Stuxnet cyberattack on Iran’s centrifuges.

One of the seven indictments was of a man who allegedly obtained access to the computer control system for the Bowman Avenue Dam in New York state. The access would have allowed the intruder to “operate and manipulate” one of the dam’s gates had it not been offline for maintenance.

Iran also engages in cyberespionage. One group, which cybersecurity research firm FireEye named Advanced Persistent Threat 33, has invaded computers around the world, with targets in the petrochemical, defense and aviation industries. The group uses code linked to Iran’s wiper malware, possibly in preparation for more destructive attacks. Another group, called Advanced Persistent Threat 34, has been active since at least 2014, targeting companies in the financial, energy, telecom and chemical industries.

Iran may be beefing up its cyberwarfare capabilities with the help of foreigners.

According to former Congressman Peter Hoekstra, who chaired the House’s Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Iran’s rapid emergence as a major cyberthreat likely stems from its close ties to Russia. Matthew McInnis, a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, believes Iran turned to Russia to level the cyberwarfare battlefield with the U.S. and the West.

Iran may also be looking to Mexico for cyberwarfare support. According to a documentary aired on the Univision television network in 2011, a former Iranian ambassador to Mexico accepted a plan from undercover Mexican students to launch crippling cyberattacks against the U.S. The targets included the White House, the CIA, the FBI and nuclear installations. The documentary also shows Venezuelan and Cuban officials in Mexico expressing interest in the plot.

Iran may view cyberwarfare as a means of overcoming its military disadvantage compared to the U.S. To that end, it will likely continue to improve its cyber capabilities.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Biggest threat to OPEC: cyberattacks</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://oilprice.com/Energy/General/Cyberattacks-The-Biggest-Threat-To-OPEC.html">https://oilprice.com/Energy/General/Cyberattacks-The-Biggest-Threat-To-OPEC.html</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Oil and cybersecurity in one sentence certainly makes for a thrilling read, and there will be an increasing amount of information on the topic as the Internet of Things expands and the global oil industry adopts automation and digital technology.</p> <p>OPEC is no exception in this digitalization drive, but unlike its non-OPEC counterparts, the cartel has emerged as much more vulnerable to cybersecurity threats.</p> <p>An analysis of data collected from 134 countries by the International Telecommunication Union has revealed that some of the world’s biggest oil producers, including Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Iran, and the UAE, are lacking in the cybersecurity department. This means that, compared to European producers and the United States, OPEC members are pretty much unprepared for a major cyberthreat.</p> <p>What is the likelihood of such a threat actually materializing? Well, the general opinion in cybersecurity circles is that everything that can be hacked will be hacked at some point. Saudi Arabia’s oil and gas industry, for example, has been a favorite target for numerous attacks over the last few years, including the Shamoon virus, which in 2012 wiped clean the disks of more than 30,000 computers at Aramco, and according to reports from the cybersecurity industry, reared its ugly head again in 2016.</p> <p>Overall, about half of all cyberattacks in the Middle East target the oil and gas industry, which suggests the answer to the above question is “Pretty high,” but the worse thing is that this likelihood is only going to get higher in the future.</p> <p>Middle Eastern producers are following in the footsteps of their non-OPEC counterparts in adopting digital technology and automation to improve efficiencies in the post-2014 world, where efficiency has come to the fore in oil and gas. The problem, of course, is that the more you digitalize, the more vulnerable you become to attacks through digital channels.</p>
<a href="#">Return to</a>	
<a href="#">Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Fidget spinner app sends data to China</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.hackread.com/this-fidget-spinner-app-is-sending-user-data-to-chinese-server/">https://www.hackread.com/this-fidget-spinner-app-is-sending-user-data-to-chinese-server/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>A few months ago, Bluetooth-enabled fidget spinners were in the news for blowing up and putting lives in danger. This time, these toys are in discussion for posing a threat to users privacy and stealing their data.</p> <p>According to Arun Magesh, an IT security researcher at Payatu Technologies, India; the AiTURE fidget hand spinner app on Play Store is collecting data of other installed apps and sending it to a server in China without their consent or knowledge.</p> <p>Developed by Chinese firm Shenzhen Heaton Technology Co.Ltd, AiTURE supports Bluetooth connectivity to user’s smartphone. Once the app is installed and connected to the phone, users can create their own patterns, single liners, and spin away.</p> <p>Arun, on the other hand, conducted an experiment on several applications to check how do they transmit the data to the Cloud. After spending some time on AiTURE fidget hand spinner, he reverse-engineered the Bluetooth communications between the app and the fidget spinner. Upon intercepting the app and the Internet connection, he discovered a huge chunk of data, that is being transmitted to a Chinese server. The identified server’s login page (api.e-toys.cn/passport/login) asks for username and password to access “Background System EToys” login system.</p> <p>On further analyzing the data packets, the researcher noted that the app sends all the information about the apps installed on his phone to the server in a clear text. Arun believes this data could be used to target ads or even send remote exploits based on 0-days on other installed on phones.</p>

	<p>Although the app has only 1,000 – 5,000 installs, it still poses a significant threat to its users since it sends all the information on installed apps along with their version and installation time.</p> <p>“If they are so smart. Why send it in plain text using HTTP and not HTTPS?? This makes me wonder if all cheap Chinese products which are sold at low prices are sold at the cost of our private data? Are we not safe from anything anymore,” Arun told exclusively to HackRead.</p> <p>However, encrypted or decrypted, the question is why a fidget spinner app is sending user data to a server in China?</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Cryptocurrency exchanges claim outages</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.reuters.com/article/us-bitcoin-exchange/cryptocurrency-exchanges-coinbase-bitfinex-down-idUSKBN1E620E">https://www.reuters.com/article/us-bitcoin-exchange/cryptocurrency-exchanges-coinbase-bitfinex-down-idUSKBN1E620E</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>(Reuters) - Digital currency exchange operators Coinbase and Bitfinex reported problems with service through their websites on Tuesday, frustrating traders seeking to cash in on the latest surge in the value of bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies.</p> <p>Wallet-provider Coinbase’s website showed “service unavailable” early on Tuesday U.S. time, flashing a message that said it was down for maintenance. Its exchange gdax.com was still quoting prices, although it also said it was experiencing a “minor service outage”.</p> <p>Bitfinex, another cryptocurrency exchange, tweeted it was under heavy distributed denial of service (DDoS) and its application programming interface was down.</p> <p>DDoS attacks have been common on the internet, using hijacked and virus-infected computers to target websites until they can no longer cope with the scale of data requested.</p> <p>It was not immediately clear if the two incidents were related to any cyberattacks.</p> <p>Bitfinex last Thursday tweeted that it had been under significant denial of service attack for several days, and that the attack had recently worsened.</p> <p>Bitcoin exchanges and wallets have a history of being hacked, and security experts say they become more vulnerable to cyber-crime as valuations rise.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Emotet info-stealer malware returns</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/emotet-infostealer-returns-new/">https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/emotet-infostealer-returns-new/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>The espionage malware Emotet is back, just in time to put some Grinch into the holiday proceedings.</p> <p>On November 9, 2017, the Cylance Threat Guidance team received a request to analyze a malicious document intended to infect a targeted system with the Emotet infostealer, a variant of the Feodo Trojan family.</p> <p>Emotet first emerged in 2014 as a trojan designed to steal banking credentials from targets in Austria and Germany. This latest offensive shows it spreading beyond financial targets and into the US and other arenas, while adding new capabilities, including a new dropper using CreateTimeQueueTimer; sandbox awareness; and anti-analysis capabilities.</p> <p>In the analyzed sample, a Microsoft Word Document that contains a malicious macro program which was developed to download Emotet, which then searches the targeted system for sensitive information that will</p>

	<p>be exfiltrated to the command and control (C2) servers under the attackers' control.</p> <p>The attacker then can sell the information harvested, or login into the account themselves to steal more information. Emotet also can spread itself to other systems by stealing an address book from one computer on the network.</p> <p>“As the holiday season is upon us, extra care should be taken when interacting with emails that contain attachments purporting to be invoices or other business communications or links to similar documents, tactics attackers favor with the hope that distracted targets may let their guard down,” Cylance warned, in a threat spotlight. It added, “To avoid being the victim of the Emotet campaign, organizations should ensure that basic security best practices are being adhered to, particularly around the handling of email with attachments and/or URL links.”</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Cyberspy group new exploit techniques</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.securityweek.com/patchwork-cyberspies-adopt-new-exploit-techniques">http://www.securityweek.com/patchwork-cyberspies-adopt-new-exploit-techniques</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Malware campaigns attributed to the <a href="#">Patchwork</a> cyberespionage group have been using a new delivery mechanism and exploiting recently patched vulnerabilities, Trend Micro warns.</p> <p>Also known as <a href="#">Dropping Elephant</a> or <i>Chinastrats</i> and believed to be operating out of the Indian subcontinent, the group is said to have been active since 2014. Initially focused on government-associated organizations that have <a href="#">connections</a> to Southeast Asia and the South China Sea, the actor <a href="#">has expanded its target list</a> to include entities in a broad range of industries.</p> <p>In a new report (<a href="#">PDF</a>) on Patchwork's latest operations, Trend Micro says that the group has added businesses to its list of targets and that its use of numerous infection vectors and payloads makes it a credible threat.</p> <p>Campaigns that security researchers have associated with the group over the course of 2017 revealed diverse methods (social engineering hooks, attack chains, and backdoors), along with the adoption of <a href="#">Dynamic Data Exchange (DDE)</a>, Windows Script Component (SCT), and exploits for recently reported vulnerabilities.</p> <p>The observed campaigns focused on multiple sectors in China and South Asia, but also hit organizations in the U.K., Turkey, and Israel. Using spear-phishing emails, the cyberespionage group targeted high-profile personalities, business-to-consumer (B2C) online retailers, telecommunications and media companies, aerospace researchers, and financial institutions. The United Nations Development Programme was targeted as well.</p> <p>The spear-phishing emails contained website redirects, direct links, or malicious attachments. Some emails contained direct links to malicious documents hosted on the attacker-owned servers. The group spoofed a news site and used it to divert visitors to socially engineered, malware-ridden documents and was also observed misusing email and newsletter distribution services.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Classic Android games malware infected</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.securityweek.com/golduck-malware-infects-classic-android-games">http://www.securityweek.com/golduck-malware-infects-classic-android-games</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Several classic game applications in Google Play have been silently downloading and installing a malicious APK file onto Android devices, Appthority reports.</p> <p>The malicious code was downloaded from a "Golduck" server and installed on devices using a technique called Java reflection. The offending applications, the security company says, were also observed running</p>

<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	<p>shell commands and sending SMS messages.</p> <p>Appthority describes the malicious applications as high quality classic games, including Tank and Bomber. Rated high on Google Play, the games had up to 10.5 million downloads when their nefarious behavior was exposed.</p> <p>The downloaded payload also contains code for sending SMS messages to users' contacts. These messages contained game information, thus potentially increasing the chances that the malware would spread to other users.</p> <p>The Golduck malware, the security company says, could allow attackers to completely compromise the infected device, especially if root is available. The threat also sets the stage for adware-related attacks.</p>
--------------------------------------	---

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Impact credential-stealers in Google Play</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.securityweek.com/millions-impacted-credential-stealers-google-play">http://www.securityweek.com/millions-impacted-credential-stealers-google-play</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>During October and November 2017, Kaspersky Lab researchers discovered 85 applications in Google Play that were designed to steal credentials for Russian social network VK.com. One of the malicious applications had more than a million downloads.</p> <p>While most of the applications were listed in the marketplace in October and gathered fewer than 1,000 installations, some were uploaded in July and proved to be highly popular among users. Seven of the apps had between 10,000 and 100,000 downloads, while nine had between 1,000 and 10,000 installations.</p> <p>The most popular of the apps masqueraded as a game. It was submitted to Google Play in April 2017 without malicious code in it, but an update in October 2017 added the information stealing capabilities. The game gathered more than 1 million downloads in the seven months it was active on Google Play.</p> <p>Most of the offending applications were designed to look like apps for the VK.com social platform, supposedly allowing users to listen to music or monitor user page visits. Because apps of this type normally ask for the user to log into their account, they didn't raise suspicion. Some of the programs were game apps.</p> <p>The campaign was targeted at VK users only. The platform is highly popular in CIS countries, and the malicious apps first checked the device language and only asked for login credentials if Russian, Ukrainian, Kazakh, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Belarusian, Kyrgyz, Romanian, Tajik, and Uzbek were in use, Kaspersky has discovered.</p> <p>The actors behind these apps had been publishing their malicious applications in Google Play for over two years, so they had to modify their code to bypass detection, Kaspersky's researchers say.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 'Stealthy admin' in hybrid Office 365</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.securityweek.com/stealthy-admin-accounts-found-hybrid-office-365-deployments">http://www.securityweek.com/stealthy-admin-accounts-found-hybrid-office-365-deployments</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>One term used for privileged Admin accounts that exist outside of protected groups is 'stealthy admins'. They are less protected and less monitored than those within protected groups, and can consequently provide a major security risk.</p> <p>The team at Preempt Security has discovered an automatically generated stealthy admin account in hybrid on-premise/Azure Microsoft Office 365 (O365) deployments.</p> <p>One aspect of the Preempt Platform's operation is to investigate and prevent insider threats, and this in turn</p>

involves detecting insider opportunities for escalating privileges. Escalation involves acquiring the rights of or using a privileged administrator account; and for this reason admin accounts should always be given greater protection.

"Organizations have well-defined groups for administrators, where they can be monitored and protected," explains Ajit Sancheti, CEO and co-founder of Preempt; "but sometimes users are given administrator rights without the account being placed into an administrator group. That's what we call a 'stealthy administrator'. Part of our job is to detect these."

Researchers from Preempt discovered that a stealthy admin is created as a matter of course during the normal use of Microsoft's Azure AD Connect. AD Connect is a tool used by organizations with hybrid on premise and cloud Office 365 deployments. It integrates on premise Active Directory with Azure AD, so that users can have a common identity throughout.

The default express use of AD Connect creates a Microsoft On Line account (MSOL) that has domain admin privileges but exists outside of any protected admin group; that is, it lives in the built-in Users Group. In order to synchronize passwords between on premise accounts and cloud, it has the ability to replicate the domain.

"Most Active Directory audit systems easily alert on excessive privileges, but will often miss users who have elevated domain privileges indirectly through domain discretionary access control list (DACL) configuration," said Roman Blachman, CTO and co-founder at Preempt. "We refer to these users as stealthy admins. The majority of our customers have Office 365 hybrid deployments and almost every one of them were vulnerable to this because Azure AD Connect was installed in express settings and created this flaw." Blachman has also explained the issue in a blog posted today.

Anyone with access to User accounts could gain access through these to the MSOL account and acquire high level domain privileges. This could be an attacker already on the network looking to escalate privilege, or a 'rogue' employee. In the latter instance, Preempt gives the example of a help desk that uses a contract employee. That employee would be a domain user, but also an account operator for help desk functional purposes.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Govt. bans Kaspersky products</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.securityweek.com/trump-signs-bill-banning-kaspersky-products">http://www.securityweek.com/trump-signs-bill-banning-kaspersky-products</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>U.S. President Donald Trump on Tuesday signed a bill that prohibits the use of Kaspersky Lab products and services in federal agencies.</p> <p>The National Defense Authorization Act for FY2018 (H.R. 2810) focuses on Department of Defense and Department of Energy programs, authorizes recruitment and retention bonuses for the Armed Forces, and makes changes to national security and foreign affairs programs.</p> <p>Section 1634 of the bill bans the use of products and services provided by Russia-based cybersecurity firm Kaspersky Lab. The prohibition will go into effect on October 1, 2018.</p> <p>"No department, agency, organization, or other element of the Federal Government may use, whether directly or through work with or on behalf of another department, agency, organization, or element of the Federal Government, any hardware, software, or services developed or provided, in whole or in part, by (1) Kaspersky Lab (or any successor entity); (2) any entity that controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with Kaspersky Lab; or (3) any entity of which Kaspersky Lab has majority ownership," the bill reads.</p> <p>Senator Jeanne Shaheen, who has spearheaded the campaign against Kaspersky, stated, "The case against Kaspersky is well-documented and deeply concerning. This law is long overdue, and I appreciate the</p>

	<p>urgency of my bipartisan colleagues on the Senate Armed Services Committee to remove this threat from government systems.”</p> <p>Sen. Shaheen recently sent a letter to the Trump administration asking that information on Kaspersky Lab be declassified “to raise public awareness regarding the serious threat that the Moscow-based software company poses to the United States’ national security.”</p> <p>The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) ordered federal agencies to stop using Kaspersky products back in September, and the bill signed on Tuesday reinforces that order. However, the government has yet to provide any evidence of wrongdoing and even Sen. Shaheen’s statements appear to be largely based on various media reports citing anonymous officials.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Brickerbot creators announce retirement</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.scmagazine.com/brickerbot-creators-announce-retirement-from-active-operations/article/713576/">https://www.scmagazine.com/brickerbot-creators-announce-retirement-from-active-operations/article/713576/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>The individual, or people, behind the BrickerBot malware attacks have decided to hang up their mouse and keyboard after claiming to have locked more than 10 million supposedly unsecure Internet of Things devices.</p> <p>Bleeping Computer reported that the person, or group, known as The Doctor or The Janitor that created the malware in response to the Mirai botnet attack told the news site in an email that it has decided to halt operations because it was having a “crying wolf” affect.</p> <p>“I believe that the project has been a technical success, but I am now starting to worry that it is also having a deleterious effect on the public's perception of the overall IoT threat. Researchers keep issuing high profile warnings about genuinely dangerous new botnets, and a few weeks or even days later they are all but gone. Sooner or later people are going to start questioning the credibility of the research and the seriousness of the situation,” The Doctor told Bleeping Computer.</p> <p>BrickerBot was first reported by Radware in April 2017 when the company saw the denial of service malware appearing in its honeypots near the end of March. The malware's MO had it searching for open Telnet ports and then brute forcing its way into the device, in a manner similar to Mirai. It then corrupts the targets storage destroying it, concluding what is called a Permanent Denial of Service (PDOS) attack.</p> <p>The Doctor told Bleeping Computer in an interview earlier this year that BrickerBot was designed as a way to identify and remove unsecure devices from the internet in the hope that such an action would limit the amount of damage being done by Mirai-style attacks. The primary Mirai attack started on October 21, 2016.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 ROBOT 19yr-old vulnerability found</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://thehackernews.com/2017/12/bleichenbacher-robot-rsa.html">https://thehackernews.com/2017/12/bleichenbacher-robot-rsa.html</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>A 19-year-old vulnerability has been re-discovered in the RSA implementation from at least 8 different vendors—including F5, Citrix, and Cisco—that can give man-in-the-middle attackers access to encrypted messages.</p> <p>Dubbed ROBOT (Return of Bleichenbacher's Oracle Attack), the attack allows an attacker to perform RSA decryption and cryptographic operations using the private key configured on the vulnerable TLS servers.</p> <p>ROBOT attack is nothing but a couple of minor variations to the old Bleichenbacher attack on the RSA</p>



encryption protocol.

First discovered in 1998 and named after Swiss cryptographer Daniel Bleichenbacher, the Bleichenbacher attack is a padding oracle attack on RSA-based PKCS#1 v1.5 encryption scheme used in SSLv2.

Leveraging an adaptive chosen-ciphertext attack which occurred due to error messages by SSL servers for errors in the PKCS #1 1.5 padding, Bleichenbacher attack allows attackers to determine whether a decrypted message is correctly padded.

This information eventually helps attackers decrypt RSA ciphertexts without recovering the server's private key, completely breaking the confidentiality of TLS when used with RSA encryption.

"An attacker could iteratively query a server running a vulnerable TLS stack implementation to perform cryptanalytic operations that may allow decryption of previously captured TLS sessions." Cisco explains in an advisory.

In 1998, Bleichenbacher proposed to upgrade encryption scheme, but instead, TLS designers kept the vulnerable encryption modes and added a series of complicated countermeasures to prevent the leakage of error details.

Now, a team of security researchers has discovered that these countermeasures were incomplete and just by using some slight variations, this attack can still be used against many HTTPS websites.

[Return to Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Security: less you spend, more you pay</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.darkreading.com/risk/security-compliance-the-less-you-spend-the-more-you-pay/d/d-id/1330622">http://www.darkreading.com/risk/security-compliance-the-less-you-spend-the-more-you-pay/d/d-id/1330622</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Like the old saying about an ounce of prevention being better than a pound of cure, complying with data protection requirements can be expensive, but the financial consequences of non-compliance can hurt a lot more.</p> <p>Research firm Ponemon Institute recently interviewed 237 individuals from 53 multinational organizations on the economic impact of their compliance-related activities.</p> <p>The study, sponsored by Globalscape, looked at the costs that organizations have incurred or are incurring in meeting the requirements of mandates such as the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI-DSS) and Healthcare Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The results were then compared with the findings from a 2011 Ponemon survey on the same topic. The differences were stark and telling.</p> <p>Average costs of compliance have increased 43%, from around \$3.5 million in 2011 to just under \$5.5 million this year, while non-compliance costs surged from \$9.4 million to \$14.8 million during the same period.</p> <p>On average, organizations that are found non-compliant with data protection obligations these days can expect to fork out at least 2.71 times more money getting into and proving compliance than if they had been compliant in the first place. Overall, non-compliance costs for organizations in the study ranged from \$2.2 million at the low end to over \$39 million at the high-end.</p> <p>The findings are important at a time when many organizations are under pressure to meet various compliance objectives. One of the most pressing among them is GDPR, which will begin enforcement actions in May. A surprising 90% of the participants in the Ponemon studied pointed to GDPR as being the most difficult regulation to meet. A previous study this year by Dimensional Research shows that many organizations—regardless of size—expect to spend north of \$1 million on GDPR compliance. More than</p>

	<p>eight in 10 expect to spend at least \$100,000.</p> <p>For the latest study, the Ponemon Institute considered expenses related to activities such as data protection and enforcement, audits and assessments, policy development, and training when calculating compliance costs. Non-compliance costs included those associated with business disruption and related productivity losses, fines, penalties, and settlement costs.</p> <p>"The overall cost of compliance versus non-compliance was surprising," says Peter Merkulov, chief technology officer at Globalscape. The delta between the two numbers underscores the need for enterprises to be vigilant about protecting data, he says. "The repercussions of not doing so are clearly pretty damaging from a cost perspective."</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Shutter Internet? Cut undersea cables</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/national/national-security/article189221684.html">http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/national/national-security/article189221684.html</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>WASHINGTON — Hundreds of thousands of miles of fiber-optic cable lay on the ocean floors, a crucial part of the global internet’s backbone, and only rarely do ship anchors, undersea landslides or saboteurs disrupt them.</p> <p>Still, a few voices now call for stronger global mechanisms and even military action to protect the cables against future malicious activity by states, saboteurs or extremists.</p> <p>“The infrastructure that underpins the internet – these undersea cables – are clearly vulnerable,” said Rishi Sunak, a British member of Parliament and champion of more vigorous action to protect submarine networks. “They underpin pretty much everything that we do.”</p> <p>Undersea cables conduct nearly 97 percent of all global communications, and every day an estimated \$10 trillion in financial transfers and vast amounts of data pass through the seabed routes. Satellites, once crucial but now limited in speed and bandwidth, handle only a tiny percentage of global communications.</p> <p>As reliance on the underwater cables soars, a growing list of countries – and even companies – have the expertise to deploy unmanned vehicles to ocean depths to access them.</p> <p>“Nowadays, there are a lot of countries and companies that have the ability to send vehicles down to the sea floor and have them manipulate, install or take away undersea cables,” said Bryan Clark, a retired naval submariner and former Navy strategist who is a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, a Washington think tank.</p> <p>The optical strands inside the cables have extraordinary capacity to transmit data, millions of phone calls per fiber. The cables that house bundled fiber optics are no thicker than a human wrist.</p> <p>Failures along cable routes are rare, numbering on average barely 200 a year along the estimated 650,000 miles of active international commercial cables laid along sea beds.</p> <p>“It’s still vanishingly small when the amount of cable around the globe is considered,” said Keith Schofield, general manager of the International Cable Protection Committee, which has its headquarters in Lymington, England.</p> <p>There are 428 known commercial fiber-optic cable routes worldwide. Many cables are laid parallel along heavily trafficked routes, like the U.S. to Britain, or through the Mediterranean and Red Sea toward India and the rest of Asia, and come ashore together. Florida has about 10 landing points for the two dozen or so cables that come ashore there.</p>

Most problems occur close to landfall, not in the open ocean, and the majority involve nets from trawlers or damage by anchors, Schofield said.

But in recent years, a few incidents have drawn attention to sabotage and espionage.

In October 2015, U.S. authorities scrambled to monitor Russian submarine patrols and a high-tech Russian surface ship, the Yantar, in a corridor of the North Atlantic that hosts a cluster of undersea cables. The Yantar carried deep-sea submersibles and cable-cutting gear.

In an earlier incident, Egypt said in March 2013 that it had arrested three scuba divers who had tried to cut an undersea fiber optic cable in the Mediterranean off Alexandria that was a vital communications link between Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Egypt never explained who the three saboteurs worked for.

At one time, only the United States and the Soviet Union, now Russia, deployed submarines able to reach deep depths to manipulate fiber-optic cables. But deep-sea remotely powered vehicles are now widely available, putting the technology in more hands.

“All you need to do is give them a claw and sharp jaws and tell them to go down and clip the cable,” said Jim Hayes, president of the Fiber Optic Association, a nonprofit professional society based in Santa Monica, California.

Hayes said far simpler means can be found for those intent on damaging the cables, especially near the congested points where they make landfall.

“If you drag an anchor and start pulling with enough force, you can bend and kink the cable ... and snap the fiber,” Hayes said.

Since the first submarine telegraphic cable was laid across the Atlantic in 1858, undersea cables have mostly been in private hands, left alone by governments and global bodies.

“Because cables aren’t owned by governments, governments have ignored them,” Schofield said.

Perhaps not entirely. The U.S. government in the 1970s is known to have tapped a cable off the Kuril Islands in eastern Russia. And in 2013, National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden revealed that U.S. and British spy agencies were stealing data from undersea cables.

A handful of other nations are believed to have the same capabilities.

“We have allowed this vital infrastructure to grow increasingly vulnerable and this should worry us all,” former Navy Adm. James Stavridis, former U.S. Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, wrote in a preface to the study.

Others involved in senior U.S. cybersecurity positions concur.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 China firm: recognize 2B people in seconds</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/666375/minority-report-artificial-intelligence-machine-dragonfly-vitu-technology">https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/666375/minority-report-artificial-intelligence-machine-dragonfly-vitu-technology</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Yitu Technology has made an AI algorithm that can connect to millions of surveillance cameras and instantly recognise people.</p> <p>The company – based in Shanghai, China – developed Dragonfly Eye to scan through millions of photographs that have been logged in the country’s national database.</p>

This means it has a collection of 1.8 billion photos on file, including visitors to the country and those taken at ports and airports.

It may also have access to the photos of every one of Hong Kong's identity card holders, although Yitu has refused to confirm this.

The cutting-edge technology is now being used track down criminals, with the early stages of use showing it has been a hugely successful.

"Our machines can very easily recognise you among at least 2 billion people in a matter of seconds," Yitu chief executive and co-founder, Zhu Long, told the South China Morning Post.

"Which would have been unbelievable just three years ago."

It is reported that on the first day Dragonfly Eye was in operation in Shanghai's Metro, it was able to track a man wanted by cops and sent police to his exact location.

A further 567 suspected criminals were nabbed on the city's subway system.

Zhu continued: "Let's say that we live in Shanghai, a city of 24 million people.

"It's challenging for the government to police such a large population. And it would be impossible without technology. Even when we have many cameras installed, it's a hard task.

"You can't watch all the videos, and doing a search is very time-consuming and requires too many resources to get meaningful results from such a huge amount of data. But artificial intelligence can do it easily, and by using existing infrastructure."

And the future of the Dragonfly technology doesn't stop at catching criminals.

It is thought it could be used to identify people at ATM machines in the future, making carrying a bank card a thing of the past.

He added: "People waste time discussing whether it's all hype or the real thing, but facial recognition already shows how real it can get. In 2015, AI had already beaten humans in face-verification tasks.

"Our algorithm is more accurate than customs officials at telling whether two images show the same person. It can even find a subject among millions of others using a 25 or 30-year-old image.

"And in the past two years, the performance of machines has increased by 1,000 times."

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 'Tech support' scam hits millennials</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/US/tech-support-scams-hit-millennials-hardest-realize/story?id=51743331&amp;cid=clicksource_81_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed">http://abcnews.go.com/US/tech-support-scams-hit-millennials-hardest-realize/story?id=51743331&amp;cid=clicksource_81_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>A new study of online "tech support" scams shows that millennials – not the elderly – may be hardest hit by the widespread frauds, and their victimization may extend far beyond the initial loss of money.</p> <p>Scam artists are using the ploy to plant malware in victims' computers and steal personal and financial information that can be used to commit identity theft later, according to a national study released Monday by Better Business Bureaus in five cities working with the Federal Trade Commission and FBI.</p> <p>Thousands of Americans have been exposed to the scam, which often appears as a pop-up ad that looks</p>

like a legitimate alert about a computer virus.

In other cases, scammers contact people by phone or email, sometimes claiming they are from Microsoft tech support or insisting that the consumer needs to renew a software license.

The FTC and the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) reported getting 41,000 complaints from U.S. consumers losing \$21 million in the first nine months of this year.

Experts say that number is probably only a fraction of the real number of victims. The BBB study noted that Microsoft has reported getting about 12,000 complaints per month worldwide about tech support scams.

"The scam is truly unreported," said Steve Bernas, president of the Chicago BBB.

The scammers ask for payments ranging from about \$500 to thousands of dollars to "fix" a supposed problem with the computer.

Often, they will ask the victim to allow them remote access to their computer. Victims have reported spending long periods of time watching the cursor on their screen move as the phony tech says he is fixing the computer; this adds to the consumer's belief that repairs are actually being made.

Instead, consumer advocates say, the scammer is just pretending to install a fix, or worse, they are installing malware that lets them peer into the victim's computer files and capture keystrokes that divulge passwords and PINs.

Some victims get hit a second time when the scammers use this information to commit identity theft.

Bernas said many victims don't even realize they've been scammed, because they think they paid a real tech company to fix their computer.

A 2016 Microsoft report showed that consumers aged 25 to 34 were six times more likely to lose money to a tech support scam than consumers who were 66 and over.

"Millennials live their life online ... they're most likely to encounter pop-up messages," said Todd Kossow, Midwest regional director of the FTC.

The Federal Trade Commission has had some success against the scammers, bringing 17 cases since 2012 and recovering several million dollars in restitution for consumers, Kossow said.

But because the scammers themselves largely operate from overseas – often based in India -- educating consumers is an important line of attack.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Report: homes mortgaged to buy bitcoin</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://dfw.cbslocal.com/2017/12/12/bitcoin-price-mortgage-homes-investment/">http://dfw.cbslocal.com/2017/12/12/bitcoin-price-mortgage-homes-investment/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>CBS Local — How much would you put at risk to invest in the hottest digital currency in the world? For some people, the skyrocketing value of Bitcoin is worth putting their own homes at stake.</p> <p>According to reports, a number of investors looking to cash in on the soaring prices have resorted to putting their houses up as collateral to fund the venture.</p> <p>"We've seen mortgages being taken out to buy bitcoin. People do credit cards, equity lines," Joseph Borg of North American Securities Administrators Association said, via Business Insider.</p>

	<p>The president of the securities firm added that he believes the risks outweigh the rewards tied to the popular cryptocurrency. “This is not something a guy who’s making \$100,000 a year, who’s got a mortgage and two kids in college ought to be invested in.”</p> <p>Economic experts have started to speculate when the bubble will burst on Bitcoin’s value. The digital currency has already taken a sharp dive after reports that hackers were able to steal tens of millions of dollars worth of Bitcoin on Dec. 7. That same day, the internet currency soared over \$4,000 in value to new record prices as it passed the \$16,000 mark.</p> <p>“There definitely are some risks — it’s not a perfect technology,” Morningstar analyst Jim Sinegal said, via CBS Chicago. “If you have money in the bank, the bank is protecting your money. If you have money in bitcoins, it’s all your responsibility.”</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Claim: bitcoin biggest bubble world history</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-12-12/its-official-bitcoin-surpasses-tulip-mania-now-biggest-bubble-world-history">http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-12-12/its-official-bitcoin-surpasses-tulip-mania-now-biggest-bubble-world-history</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>One month ago, a chart from Convoy Investments went viral for showing that among all of the world's most famous asset bubbles, bitcoin was only lagging the infamous 17th century "Tulip Mania."</p> <p>One month later, the price of bitcoin has exploded even higher, and so it is time to refresh where in the global bubble race bitcoin now stands, and also whether it has finally surpassed "Tulips."</p> <p>Conveniently, overnight the former Bridgewater analysts Howard Wang and Robert Wu who make up Convoy, released the answer in the form of an updated version of their asset bubble chart. In the new commentary, Wang writes that the Bitcoin prices have again more than doubled since the last update, and "its price has now gone up over 17 times this year, 64 times over the last three years and superseded that of the Dutch Tulip's climb over the same time frame."</p> <p>That's right: as of this moment it is official that bitcoin is now the biggest bubble in history, having surpassed the Tulip Mania of 1634-1637.</p> <p>And with that we can say that crypto pioneer Mike Novogratz was right once again when he said that "This is going to be the biggest bubble of our lifetimes." Which, of course, does not stop him from investing hundreds of millions in the space: when conceding that cryptos are the biggest bubble ever, "Novo" also said he expects bitcoin to hit \$40,000 and ethereum to triple to \$1,500.</p> <p>"Bitcoin could be at \$40,000 at the end of 2018. It easily could," Novogratz said Monday on CNBC's "Fast Money." "Ethereum, which I think just touched \$500 or is getting close, could be triple where it is as well."</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Feds 'heightened posture' over hackers</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/feds-heightened-posture-hackers-target-todays-alabama-election/story?id=51744065">http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/feds-heightened-posture-hackers-target-todays-alabama-election/story?id=51744065</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Federal officials are in "a heightened posture" looking to thwart any hackers who may be targeting today's hotly contested Senate race in Alabama, where allegations of sexual misconduct against the Republican nominee, Roy Moore, have upended a once-presumed Republican victory, according to a top Homeland Security official.</p> <p>This morning, officials from the Department of Homeland Security held a "coordination call" with state and local counterparts in Alabama, and similar conference calls are expected throughout the day, said</p>

Chris Krebs, who is acting as the under secretary for DHS' National Protection and Programs Directorate.

Hoping to become the next U.S. senator from Alabama, Moore, a former Alabama Supreme Court chief justice, is facing off against Democrat Doug Jones, a former U.S. attorney.

During the presidential campaign last year, cyberthieves successfully stole voter-related information from the Illinois election system, and more than 20 other states had their systems scanned by hackers.

"We learned our lessons last year," Krebs told reporters today, warning that the hackers "will be back."

That's why authorities have made cybersecurity for states "a priority going forward" and are taking steps today to help state and local election officials in Alabama, according to Krebs.

"They know we're here to assist," Krebs said. "We've been working with them kind of 'Game Day' planning for quite some time now."

He noted that a "protective security adviser" and a "cybersecurity adviser" from DHS are in Montgomery, Alabama, sitting "side by side" with state officials. DHS took similar steps last month, helping state officials in Virginia and New Jersey keep tabs on the cybersecurity of special elections for governor in their states.

Krebs emphasized that DHS is only there to offer "services and support."

"States manage their elections; that is a constitutional truism," he said. "We're not getting in the way of that."

Instead, DHS offers states "a range of services," including "cyber hygiene scans" that regularly check state or local government systems for issues or vulnerabilities, he said. "For me it's a no-brainer. ... It doesn't cost anything to the states. It's free, and [it's] just a good insurance policy."

Krebs said he is "not aware" of any cyberactivity targeting today's election in Alabama.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

## Terror Conditions

[Top of page](#)

HEADLINE	<b>12/12 Suspect claims: FBI pushed for terrorism</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/former-police-officer-argues-fbi-pushed-him-to-support-terrorism/2017/12/12/dc812230-deaf-11e7-8679-a9728984779c_story.html?utm_term=.b01ecfac008c">https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/former-police-officer-argues-fbi-pushed-him-to-support-terrorism/2017/12/12/dc812230-deaf-11e7-8679-a9728984779c_story.html?utm_term=.b01ecfac008c</a>
GIST	<p>In the years Nicholas Young went to work patrolling Washington's Metro system, a federal prosecutor said, an FBI agent was lying awake at night worrying about what he might do.</p> <p>As the first police officer to face terrorism charges in the United States goes to trial in federal court this week, FBI special agents and undercover operatives explained to jurors how they began investigating Young in 2010 — and why he was not arrested until August 2016. It was then that Young bought Google Play gift cards that prosecutors say he thought would be used by Islamic State recruits to download encrypted messaging applications.</p> <p>During the years-long investigation of the Alexandria, Va., native, several law enforcement officials testified, Young repeatedly made violent remarks that were concerning but did not prompt immediate action. Prosecutors said a sting operation involving the gift cards was necessary to get a dangerous radical not just off the streets, but also out of law enforcement.</p>

An FBI agent will testify that “he didn’t sleep at nights because [Young] had talked about torturing and killing an FBI agent,” Assistant U.S. Attorney Gordon Kromberg told the judge Tuesday.

But Young’s attorneys countered, saying his arrest was an overreach born of frustration that a six-year investigation had yielded nothing of value.

In private exchanges, defense attorney Linda Moreno said in her opening statement, agents wrote they “hit the case with a defibrillator,” saying “let’s hope he goes one step further” and breaks the law.

“The FBI induced Nicholas Young, a police officer who had served with distinction, to commit a crime where none existed,” she said.

Young, 37, who worked for the Metro Transit Police, hopes to be the first person since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks to win a terrorism trial by arguing that he was entrapped by law enforcement.

In his opening statement, Kromberg pushed back against that defense, telling jurors the government would show that Young had long-standing inclinations toward terrorism and believed in an alliance between white supremacists and Muslim extremists against Jewish people.

“Young’s hatred of Jews was quite extraordinary,” Kromberg said.

Young participated in reenactments as an SS officer — “one of the most vicious terrorist groups that ever existed,” Kromberg said. He said jurors would see a picture of the SS tattoo on Young’s arm, showing that the police officer didn’t just dress up as a Nazi — “he saw himself as that.” Kromberg also said Young had a framed photograph of Hitler at his house and used an Israeli flag as a doormat.

Moreno told jurors that Young is no neo-Nazi but a libertarian with an interest in politics who was committed to his job in law enforcement and his country. “A six-year investment . . . and what they have to show for it are gift cards,” Moreno said. “That’s why they’re talking about Hitler.”

An undercover officer first met Young in 2010 while tracking suspected extremists in Northern Virginia, under the guise of being a recent convert to Islam and a U.S. Marine from Boston.

They hit it off right away, said the officer, who testified behind a screen and used the pseudonym Khalil Sullivan.

“We had good conversations” about work, politics and dating, Sullivan said.

Young was also part of conversations about terrorism, Sullivan testified, and spoke of his “animosity” toward the FBI. He believed he was being watched, and he talked about how he could take on agents at his home or how someone could attack federal buildings.

“There were times we were joking, times we were not joking,” Sullivan said. He said Young’s descriptions of potential clashes with federal agents were “hypothetical.”

While the level of detail Young gave in describing a potential attack on a federal building was “a little alarming,” Sullivan said, “I didn’t take it as a plan.”

Sullivan ultimately cut ties with Young at his bosses’ direction; he was told to focus on another investigation.

There was no apparent FBI intervention when Young in 2011 twice went to fight against Moammar Gaddafi in Libya, but when he came back he was questioned by agents at Dulles International Airport.

In the summer of 2014, an undercover informant targeted Young more directly after meeting him at the All Dulles Area Muslim Society Center in Chantilly, Va.



Identified in court only as Mohammed, or “Mo,” the informant posed as a military reservist of Palestinian descent. He told Young that, like him, he had gone to George Mason University, had religious conflicts at work and had clashed with his father.

The FBI paid him \$34,000 to befriend Young, Mo testified.

Over Sprites and Afghan food, Mo said, he and Young discussed religion and politics.

But then Young gave Mo extensive advice for joining the Islamic State undetected, and he sent Mo a text message suggesting he thought his friend was on vacation, according to the recorded conversations introduced in court.

Mo actually traveled to Turkey because the FBI was worried that Young, as a police officer, “had access to government records and would be able to check” if the informant had not actually left the country, FBI Special Agent John Minchello testified.

Young was by his own admission “paranoid,” as he repeatedly told Mo in conversations played in court.

“The people that do this,” he said of informants, “are going to be nice guys; they’re going to be great guys.”

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

**HEADLINE** 12/12 US wary Putin announcement in Syria

**SOURCE** <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-usa-russia/u-s-wary-of-putins-declaration-of-military-victory-in-syria-idUSKBN1E62L7?il=0>

**GIST** WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The United States is voicing skepticism about Russian President Vladimir Putin’s announcement of a major withdrawal of Russian troops from Syria and is arguing that his declaration of victory against Islamic State was premature.

Putin, during a surprise visit on Monday to Russia’s Hmeymim air base in Syria, declared that the work of Russian forces was largely done in backing the Syrian government against militants in the country’s war following the defeat of “the most battle-hardened group of international terrorists.”

Still, U.S. officials are challenging the Russian and Syrian portrayal of Syria as a country poised for peace once the final enclaves of the Islamic State militant group, known as ISIS, are recaptured.

Syrian government forces, U.S. officials said, are too few, too poor and too weak to secure the country. Islamic State, and other militants in Syria, have ample opportunity to regroup, especially if the political grievances that drove the conflict remain unresolved, the officials said.

“We think the Russian declarations of ISIS’ defeat are premature,” a White House National Security Council spokeswoman said. “We have repeatedly seen in recent history that a premature declaration of victory was followed by a failure to consolidate military gains, stabilize the situation, and create the conditions that prevent terrorists from reemerging”.

The U.S. military in Syria, which unlike the Russians are operating there without the blessing of Damascus, has long been skeptical of Moscow’s announced drawdowns.

Marine Major Adrian Rankine-Galloway, a Pentagon spokesman, said the United States had not observed any significant withdrawal since Putin’s announcement.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	<b>12/12 Claim: NYC bomber followed radical cleric</b>
SOURCE	<a href="http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/12/13/bangladesh-accused-nyc-attacker-followed-radical-preacher.html">http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/12/13/bangladesh-accused-nyc-attacker-followed-radical-preacher.html</a>
GIST	<p>DHAKA, Bangladesh – The man accused of carrying out a bomb attack in New York City's subway system was influenced by the sermons and writings of a radical Muslim preacher, but appeared to have no known links to local radical groups, Bangladeshi officials said Wednesday.</p> <p>The suspect, identified as Akayed Ullah, a 27-year-old Bangladeshi immigrant, had asked his wife in Bangladesh to read the writings and listen to the sermons of Moulana Jasimuddin Rahmani, the currently imprisoned leader of a banned group called Ansarullah Bangla Team, said Monirul Islam, a top official of the counterterrorism department.</p> <p>The group has been linked to killings and attacks on secular academics and atheist bloggers in Bangladesh. Rahmani is serving time in prison for his involvement in the killings.</p> <p>The wife was questioned in Bangladesh and told investigators that her husband discussed Rahman's writings with her during his last visit home, Islam said.</p> <p>Ullah is accused of strapping a crude pipe bomb to his body and detonating it during rush hour Monday.</p> <p>Relatives and police said Ullah last visited his wife and newborn son in Bangladesh in September, after which he returned to the United States.</p> <p>Counterterrorism officials questioned the wife and her parents before releasing her Tuesday night, Islam said, adding that investigators were currently questioning his brother-in-law and also planned to question any known close associates.</p> <p>Ullah arrived in the United States in 2011 and the Department of Homeland Security said he is a lawful permanent resident of the U.S. who was living in Brooklyn. He came to the U.S. on a visa issued to him based on a family connection to a U.S. citizen.</p> <p>U.S. law enforcement officials familiar with the investigation said Ullah had looked at Islamic State group propaganda online and told investigators in the United States he was retaliating against U.S. military aggression, but had no direct contact with the group.</p>
	<p><a href="#">Return to</a></p> <p><a href="#">Top</a></p>

HEADLINE	<b>12/12 DHS: New England border security data</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://homelandprepnews.com/stories/25718-dhs-releases-fy2017-border-security-statistics-new-england/">https://homelandprepnews.com/stories/25718-dhs-releases-fy2017-border-security-statistics-new-england/</a>
GIST	<p>The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recently announced its end-of-year immigration enforcement numbers for New England for fiscal year 2017 (FY17).</p> <p>“CBP officers at the ports of entry throughout New England are committed to enforcing the border security laws of our nation, which includes a significant focus on counterterrorism, while also facilitating international trade and travel,” William A. Ferrara, director of field operations for Boston, said.</p> <p>According to the statistics, the total number of apprehensions in FY17 in Swanton and Houlton Sectors increased. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) reported 449 apprehensions in Swanton Sector and 30 in Houlton Sector.</p> <p>However, apprehensions of individuals present without admission from Canada (PWAC) declined. There were 165 PWAC apprehensions in Swanton Sector and 11 in Houlton Sector.</p> <p>Collaboration between Air and Marine agents and other law enforcement agencies resulted in 14</p>

<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	<p>apprehensions and 213 criminal arrests in New England.</p> <p>CBP officers at the Boston Field Office, which covers all of New England, intercepted 4,788 inadmissible aliens, an increase from FY16. The total number of arriving passengers, however, also increased from last year.</p> <p>Nationwide in FY17, CBP reported 310,531 apprehensions and the lowest level of illegal cross-border migration on record, as measured by apprehensions along the border and inadmissible encounters at U.S. ports of entry.</p> <p>“The work our agents have successfully carried out in FY17 intercepting those who have violated our immigration laws is to be commended and we will remain vigilant as we move forward in the years to come,” Houlton Chief Patrol Agent Daniel R. Hiebert said.</p>
--------------------------------------	---

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 NYPD: getting harder to stop lone wolf</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.cbsnews.com/news/port-authority-bomb-new-york-nypd-deputy-commissioner-counterterrorism-john-miller/">https://www.cbsnews.com/news/port-authority-bomb-new-york-nypd-deputy-commissioner-counterterrorism-john-miller/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>The suspect in an attempted bombing inside a pedestrian tunnel that links New York's Port Authority bus terminal to 11 subway lines has been officially charged with terrorism-related crimes. The homemade bomb went off at the height of Monday's morning rush hour near one of the world's busiest transportation hubs. Sources have confirmed to CBS News that the suspect, 27-year-old Akayed Ullah, claimed to be inspired by ISIS.</p> <p>Ullah, who came to the U.S. from Bangladesh on a family visa six years ago, was taken to a hospital with injuries from the blast. Five others were slightly hurt in the incident.</p> <p>"This is an individual who came from Bangladesh, was living here, went through a number of jobs, was not particularly struggling financially or under any known pressure, who was not on our radar at the NYPD, not on the FBI radar, and he's somewhat characteristic of what we've been seeing across the world which is somebody who turns up one day out of the blue," John Miller, NYPD deputy commissioner for intelligence and counterterrorism, told "CBS This Morning."</p> <p>Monday's bombing came just over a month after a man mowed down pedestrians on a lower Manhattan bike path with a rented truck, killing eight and injuring a dozen others.</p> <p>Miller said it's not only difficult to prevent these lone wolf attacks – it's "getting harder."</p> <p>"Where the conspiracy is within the confines of their own mind, and that's a very hard place to get to. When you combine that with the fact that now these [cellphone] devices are encrypted so if you bring it to the manufacturer with a court order, even they've designed it so that they can't open it," Miller said. "You find yourself increasingly behind the eight ball as the terrorist organizations seize on this and increase the breadth and space of that propaganda that's meant to reach those people who are searching for something."</p> <p>The suspect's homemade bomb raises concerns yet again about would-be terrorists' ability to make these devices at home.</p> <p>"If you look at what he attempted to make that bomb out of and what he attempted to make it into, it didn't function with the force and power that the recipe intended it to. I think what we saw yesterday was something that could have been far, far worse. "</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 NYC shrugs off attack; crowds return</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/12/12/new-yorkers-shrug-off-attack-crowds-return-to-bombing-scene.html">http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/12/12/new-yorkers-shrug-off-attack-crowds-return-to-bombing-scene.html</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>NEW YORK – New York subway riders shrugged off the city's latest attack Tuesday, a day after police say a would-be suicide attacker set off a pipe bomb.</p> <p>The underground passageway at the Times Square station where the homemade device went off Monday was crowded with commuters a day later. The only sign of Monday's explosion was in increased police presence, including a badge-wearing German shepherd named Omar.</p> <p>Riders said they had no qualms about returning to the station where authorities say Akayed Ullah set off the bomb.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Bangladesh questions bomber's family</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/bangladesh-condemns-us-attack-citizen-suspect-51731154">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/bangladesh-condemns-us-attack-citizen-suspect-51731154</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Bangladesh counterterrorism officers are questioning the wife and other relatives of a man accused of carrying out a bomb attack in New York City's subway system, officials said Tuesday.</p> <p>Bangladesh's government condemned the attack, saying it opposes all forms of terrorism and violent extremism.</p> <p>U.S. authorities have identified the suspect as Akayed Ullah, a 27-year-old Bangladeshi immigrant. Ullah is accused of strapping a crude pipe bomb to his body and detonating it during rush hour Monday in an attack in which only he was seriously wounded.</p> <p>Relatives and police said Ullah last visited Bangladesh in September to see his wife and newborn son. He left both behind when he returned to the United States.</p> <p>Ullah arrived in the United States in 2011 and the Department of Homeland Security said he is a lawful permanent resident of the U.S. who was living in Brooklyn. He came to the U.S. on a visa issued to him based on a family connection to a U.S. citizen.</p> <p>Law enforcement officials familiar with the investigation said Ullah had looked at Islamic State group propaganda online and told investigators he was retaliating against U.S. military aggression, but had no direct contact with the group. The people spoke on the condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to speak publicly about the blast.</p> <p>Ullah's uncle, Abdul Ahad, said the suspect mostly remained inside a small apartment in Dhaka's Hazribagh area when he recently visited Bangladesh.</p> <p>"He went out of his residence to offer prayers at a nearby mosque," Ahad told The Associated Press.</p> <p>He said Ullah arrived in Bangladesh on Sept. 8 and returned to New York on Oct. 22.</p> <p>"He stayed with his wife and 6-month-old baby boy," he said, adding that Ullah was a quiet person who rarely socialized.</p> <p>Ahad said Ullah also returned to Bangladesh two years ago to get married and stayed then for about three months.</p> <p>Ahad, Ullah's wife and her parents are being interrogated by officials from Bangladesh's Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime Department, said Abdul Mannan, an official involved in the</p>

	<p>investigation.</p> <p>Mannan said Ullah appeared to have no criminal record in Bangladesh and was not a known member of any militant group.</p> <p>The government said in a statement that "Bangladesh is committed to its declared policy of 'zero tolerance' against terrorism, and condemns terrorism and violent extremism in all forms or manifestations anywhere in the world, including Monday morning's incident in New York City."</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Military: drone strike hit 'imminent threat'</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/somalia-intelligence-officials-report-suspected-us-airstrike-51736070?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/somalia-intelligence-officials-report-suspected-us-airstrike-51736070?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>A U.S. military drone strike on a vehicle carrying explosives in Somalia has removed "an imminent threat to the people of Mogadishu" by the al-Shabab extremist group, the U.S. Africa Command said Tuesday.</p> <p>The airstrike was carried out early Tuesday morning about 65 kilometers (40 miles) southwest of Somalia's capital, the U.S. statement said, adding that no civilians were killed. It was not immediately clear how many al-Shabab fighters may have been killed.</p> <p>A senior Somali intelligence official said the airstrike largely destroyed a minibus travelling near the rebel-held village of Mubarak in Lower Shabelle region. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.</p> <p>The al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab has been blamed for the massive truck bombing in Mogadishu in October that killed 512 people, wounded more than 300 others and left more than 60 missing. Only a few attacks since the ones on Sept. 11, 2001 have killed as many people, according to the Global Terrorism Database at the University of Maryland.</p> <p>Al-Shabab, the deadliest Islamic extremist group in Africa, often targets high-profile areas of Mogadishu including hotels, military checkpoints and the presidential palace.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Nigeria: teenage girl suicide bombers kill 4</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/teenage-girl-suicide-bombers-kill-nigerias-north-51739954?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/teenage-girl-suicide-bombers-kill-nigerias-north-51739954?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>A Nigerian official says two teenage girl suicide bombers attacked the town of Gwoza, in the country's north, killing at least four people.</p> <p>Col. Onyema Nwachukwu, spokesman for the Military Command and Control Center in Maiduguri, said Tuesday that the attack was carried out Monday evening. He said local defense forces spotted the girls and shot one, detonating her vest and killing only her. He said the other girl managed to infiltrate the crowded residential area in Borno state and detonated herself, killing four others.</p> <p>He said several people injured have been taken to a nearby medical facility for treatment.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Russia: New Year's holiday plot foiled</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/russian-security-agency-busts-suicide-bomber-cell-51740066?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/russian-security-agency-busts-suicide-bomber-cell-51740066?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed</a>

GIST	<p>Russia's top domestic security agency says it has detained three suspected members of a sleeper cell of the Islamic State group who have been preparing suicide bombings in Moscow.</p> <p>The Federal Security Service, or FSB, said Tuesday that the suspects were plotting a series of suicide attacks in the Russian capital during the New Year's holidays and the presidential election campaign.</p> <p>The FSB said the suspects, who came from ex-Soviet nations in Central Asia, were manufacturing self-made explosive devices. Monday's search in their rented apartment outside Moscow found explosives along with assault rifles and hand grenades.</p> <p>FSB director Alexander Bortnikov said another IS cell was uncovered in the southern Stavropol region.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

HEADLINE	<b>12/12 Latest development NYC bomb device</b>
SOURCE	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/US/nyc-bombing-device/story?id=51737858">http://abcnews.go.com/US/nyc-bombing-device/story?id=51737858</a>
GIST	<p>The explosive device detonated in the New York City subway system Monday morning did not fully shatter but had the ability to impose more injuries, according to a law enforcement source.</p> <p>Authorities called the homemade device an "improvised low-tech explosive" that was attached to the suspect with hook-and-loop fasteners and zip ties.</p> <p>The bomb was built from a 12-inch-long pipe, black powder and rigged with a 9-volt battery and a wire that came from a Christmas light, a law enforcement source told ABC News.</p> <p>"He did follow some of the instructions that you can find readily online, unfortunately, to create such a device," New York Police Department counterterrorism chief James Waters told ABC News. "A Christmas light bulb is one of those components."</p> <p>The pipe had nails stuffed into it, the source said, and could have caused multiple injuries. But the pipe failed to fully shatter and a 6-inch piece was discovered completely intact.</p> <p>"This could have been worse," the law enforcement source said.</p> <p>The FBI lab in Quantico, Virginia, and the NYPD bomb squad are analyzing components of the explosive.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

HEADLINE	<b>12/12 NYC bomber taunted Trump on Facebook</b>
SOURCE	<a href="http://www.cnn.com/2017/12/12/us/new-york-explosion/index.html">http://www.cnn.com/2017/12/12/us/new-york-explosion/index.html</a>
GIST	<p>(CNN)The man accused of blowing up a homemade explosive in a pedestrian subway tunnel in the heart of New York City posted on Facebook earlier in the day, saying, "Trump you failed to protect your nation," according to a criminal complaint.</p> <p>Akayed Ullah, a 27-year-old Bangladeshi man, faces a number of federal and state terrorism charges after he allegedly detonated a device made of a battery, wires, metal screws and a Christmas tree lightbulb during the busy morning commute on Monday.</p> <p>Five people were treated for minor injuries at area hospitals, while the suspect was said to be seriously injured.</p> <p>In an interview with investigators, Ullah admitted that he built and detonated the device and said he was inspired to do so by ISIS.</p>

	<p>"I did it for the Islamic State," Ullah told investigators, according to the federal complaint.</p> <p>He faces five federal terrorism-related charges and three state terrorism-related charges, according to court documents.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Saudi-led raid Yemen police camp; 39 dead</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security/at-least-39-yemenis-dead-in-saudi-led-raid-on-police-camp-in-sanaa-official-idUSKBN1E7125">https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security/at-least-39-yemenis-dead-in-saudi-led-raid-on-police-camp-in-sanaa-official-idUSKBN1E7125</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>DUBAI (Reuters) - Saudi-led coalition aircraft struck a military police camp in the Houthi-controlled Yemeni capital Sanaa on Wednesday, killing at least 39 people and wounding 90 more, including some prisoners, an official and witnesses said.</p> <p>The strike is part of an air campaign by the Western-backed coalition on the Iran-allied Houthis that has escalated since the Houthis crushed an uprising last week led by former Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh and killed him.</p> <p>One official in the camp said the coalition aircraft had launched seven raids on the camp, located in the eastern part of Sanaa, where some 180 prisoners were being held.</p> <p>The official said rescue teams had pulled out 35 bodies from the rubble, while the rest were not accounted for.</p> <p>It was the latest in a string of air raids the coalition has conducted on Sanaa and other parts of the country, sometimes causing multiple casualties among civilians.</p> <p>A spokesman for the Saudi-led coalition could not immediately be reached for comment on the report. The coalition denies that it targets civilians.</p> <p>The United States and Britain provide political backing as well as weapons and logistical support for the Saudi-led coalition, which has been fighting since 2015 to restore Yemen's internationally-recognised president, Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, to power.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Philippines extend martial law in south</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/philippine-congress-votes-extend-martial-law-south-51757675">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/philippine-congress-votes-extend-martial-law-south-51757675</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>The Philippine Congress voted overwhelmingly Wednesday to approve President Rodrigo Duterte's request to extend martial law in the south by a year after the military warned that terrorist threats continue to lurk in the region despite the defeat of a disastrous pro-Islamic State group siege.</p> <p>A majority of the Senate and the House of Representatives — with 240 voting to approve and 27 opposing — backed the extension of martial law across the Mindanao region through the end of 2018. The vote followed warnings by Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and other officials that IS-linked militants were trying to recover from their defeat in southern Marawi city and were plotting new attacks.</p> <p>"The rebellion has not stopped, it has just moved to another place," Lorenzana told senators and House members in a special joint session.</p> <p>Several lawmakers from the south backed martial law, saying it would prevent a repeat of the bloody Marawi siege and foster the Islamic city's rebuilding.</p>

	<p>Five months of intense fighting, including daily airstrikes and artillery bombardment by the military on hundreds of militants, left more than 1,100 combatants and noncombatants dead and displaced about half a million people, turning mosque-studded Marawi's central business and residential districts into a smoldering war zone.</p> <p>Lorenzana said it would take at least three years to rebuild Marawi, a bastion of Islamic faith in the predominantly Roman Catholic Philippines.</p> <p>Opponents argued that extending martial law in the south is unconstitutional because it's an "extreme measure" that can only be imposed when actual rebellions against the government exist. They expressed fears that such a move can be a prelude for Duterte to declare martial law throughout the Philippines.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Cleared Gitmo detainees 'stuck'</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/men-due-leave-gitmo-obama-stuck-trump-51756753">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/men-due-leave-gitmo-obama-stuck-trump-51756753</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Abdellatif Nasser got what he thought was the best news possible in the summer of 2016: One of his lawyers called him at the Guantanamo Bay detention center and told him that the U.S. decided he no longer posed a threat and could go home to Morocco.</p> <p>The prisoner allowed himself to get excited, to think about Moroccan food, imagining he would be home in no time. "I've been here 14 years," he said at the time. "A few months more is nothing."</p> <p>But his optimism turned out to be misplaced. A diplomatic agreement that would have allowed him to go free was not returned by Morocco until Dec. 28, eight days too late to meet a deadline to be among the last prisoners to leave under President Barack Obama.</p> <p>Now, he is one of five prisoners who the U.S. cleared to go but whose freedom is in doubt under President Donald Trump.</p> <p>"We had hoped until the last moment that he might still be released," said Shelby Sullivan-Bennis, the lawyer who told him about his pending release and shared her notes from the conversation. "When it didn't happen we were crushed. That eight-day foible has turned into a potential lifetime of detention."</p> <p>The Trump administration has not released any prisoners and not added any to the list of cleared men who can go home, or to a third country, for resettlement. There were 197 transferred out under his predecessor and more than 500 under President George W. Bush.</p> <p>Obama sought to close the detention center but was thwarted by Congress because of objections over transferring any of the remaining detainees to facilities in the U.S.</p> <p>"It is entirely unprecedented for an administration to take the position that there will be no transfers out of Guantanamo without regard to the facts, without regard to individual circumstances," said Pardiss Kebriaei, a detainee attorney with the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights.</p> <p>The administration has not announced its policy toward the detention center. But Trump said on Twitter before he took office that there should be no further releases from "Gitmo," as it's often called. "These are extremely dangerous people and should not be allowed back onto the battlefield," he said.</p> <p>Air Force Maj. Ben Sakrisson, a Pentagon spokesman for issues related to Guantanamo, said detainee case files will still be reviewed on a periodic basis but the government "is still considering whether or not to transfer detainees."</p> <p>A National Security Council spokeswoman, Tara Rigler, noted that the president has said the detention center will "remain an available option in the war on terrorism." She said he will make any decisions</p>



related to detainees "on a case-by-case basis and in the best interest of the United States," but she declined to go into further detail.

The possibility that former Guantanamo prisoners would resume hostile activities has long been a concern that has played into the debate over releases. The office of the Director of National Intelligence said this summer in its most recent report on the subject that about 17 percent of the 728 detainees who have been released are "confirmed" and 12 percent are "suspected" of re-engaging in such activities.

The 41 remaining prisoners include the five approved for transfer and 10 who have been charged by military commission. That leaves 26 in indefinite confinement who could potentially be reviewed and added to the cleared list. Several may still be prosecuted and are unlikely to be set free, but lawyers for the rest are considering filing new legal challenges, arguing that a policy of no releases would mean their confinement can no longer legally be justified as a temporary wartime measure.

In addition to Nasser, the prisoners who have been cleared for release come from Algeria, Yemen and Tunisia. Another was born in the United Arab Emirates but has been identified in Pentagon documents as an ethnic Rohingya who is stateless.

A review board cleared the Algerian, Sufiyan Barhoumi, and he was expected to go just before Obama left office, but then Defense Secretary Ash Carter did not sign off on the transfer and he had to stay behind despite a last-minute legal appeal filed in a federal court in Washington on behalf of him and Nasser. The other three have been approved for release by the task force since at least 2010. It's not publicly known why the U.S. has not been able to resettle them. A lawyer appointed to represent the one born in the U.A.E. says the man has never agreed to a meeting.

"The daily reality of what it means to them is really settling in," said Sullivan-Bennis, who met with Nasser and other detainees at the base last week to discuss legal strategies as the men near their 16th year confined at the U.S. base on the southeastern coast of Cuba.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	<b>12/12 Iraq PM warns ISIS may emerge again</b>
SOURCE	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iraq-pm-warns-islamic-state-erupt-51746716?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iraq-pm-warns-islamic-state-erupt-51746716?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed</a>
GIST	<p>Three days after declaring victory over the Islamic State group, Iraq's prime minister warns that the group's extremists might "erupt again somewhere else" without international cooperation in combatting the militants.</p> <p>Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi told reporters Tuesday that "we have managed to break them" in Iraq, but added that it's a worry for everyone that IS has "this unfortunate ability to recruit young people very quickly."</p> <p>He said there must be an effort to "remove their grassroots in the region."</p> <p>Al-Abadi made the comments at a news conference on the sidelines of a climate summit outside Paris,</p> <p>He called for continued international cooperation in training Iraqi forces and providing logistical and intelligence support.</p> <p>Al-Abadi declared victory in the more than three-year fight against IS in a national address Saturday.</p>
<a href="#">Return to</a>	
<a href="#">Top</a>	

**Suspicious, Unusual**

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Researcher: ‘man flu’ real phenomena</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/dec/12/man-flu-a-real-phenomena-says-researcher/">https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/dec/12/man-flu-a-real-phenomena-says-researcher/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>The term “man flu” has gained popularity as a put-down to describe men who exaggerate symptoms of a cold or the flu to gain sympathy. But a new study dispels this myth and provides scientific arguments for male inferiority when it comes to upper-respiratory diseases.</p> <p>In a review of research into the differences between how men and women experience a cold and the flu, clinician Kyle Sue found that testosterone plays an important role in weakening the immune system.</p> <p>“When the men are told to ‘man up’ when we have the flu, they should instead be told to ‘woman up,’” Dr. Sue, an assistant professor of family medicine at Memorial University of Newfoundland in Canada, told The Washington Times. “Because ‘manning up’ means more testosterone, but apparently that’s counterproductive.”</p> <p>While never personally accused of suffering “man flu,” Dr. Sue said that a week under the weather inspired him to look into the research as part of a project for his master’s degree program.</p> <p>“It was very pertinent at the time and potentially entertaining, so I started looking at the literature” and was surprised there were so many studies on the topic, he said.</p> <p>For his paper, titled “The science behind ‘man flu’” and published this week in the British Medical Journal, Dr. Sue reviewed about 30 studies that ranged from clinical data to mouse trials to behavioral psychology to immune response.</p> <p>A number of study authors were women — “I would have thought that men would be more invested in this topic,” he said — but research on testosterone levels provided the greatest insight into the male-female divide.</p> <p>In particular, higher testosterone in the blood corresponded to a lower immune response, whereas higher estrogen levels led to a higher response, and then lessened after menopause, he said.</p> <p>Other data collected showed that seasonal influenza rates of infection were higher in men than women and that men were more likely to have worse and longer-lasting symptoms, are hospitalized more, and are more likely to die from complications.</p> <p>“Quite frankly, I had actually thought it was all a myth,” Dr. Sue said of the findings.</p> <p>While encouraging, more rigorous research needs to be done to establish that “man flu” is a real phenomenon and not a chance occurrence.</p> <p>“Certainly the studies that I found aren’t definitive,” he said, “there still needs to be higher quality studies that need to be done.”</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Islamic Jihad drops Israel airstrike claim</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/latest-militant-group-fighters-killed-gaza-51736829?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/latest-militant-group-fighters-killed-gaza-51736829?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>The Latest on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the fallout from the U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel (all times local):</p> <p>4:30 p.m.</p> <p>The Islamic Jihad militant group in Gaza now says the blast that killed two of its members was an</p>

	<p>accident.</p> <p>The group earlier Tuesday accused Israel of killing the men in an airstrike. But it has issued a new statement saying the men had mishandled explosives.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>3:15 p.m.</p> <p>The Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant group says two of its members have been killed in an explosion in the Gaza Strip.</p> <p>The cause of the blast was not immediately clear.</p> <p>Islamic Jihad claimed the men were killed by an Israeli airstrike while riding on a motorcycle. But Israel said it was not responsible.</p> <p>Earlier Tuesday, four Palestinians were wounded, one seriously, by Israeli gunfire as they protested near the Israeli border fence in eastern Gaza City.</p> <p>In addition to border protests, Palestinian militants have fired several rockets at Israel in recent days, sparking Israeli retaliatory airstrikes and shelling. Two Hamas militants and two demonstrators were killed over the weekend.</p> <p>The protests followed President Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital last week.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Silicon Valley paradox: 25% hunger</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/dec/12/the-silicon-valley-paradox-one-in-four-people-are-at-risk-of-hunger">https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/dec/12/the-silicon-valley-paradox-one-in-four-people-are-at-risk-of-hunger</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>In a region famed for its foodie culture, where the well-heeled can dine on gold-flecked steaks, \$500 tasting menus and \$29 loaves of bread, hunger is alarmingly widespread, according to a new study shared exclusively with the Guardian.</p> <p>One in four people in Silicon Valley are at risk of hunger, researchers at the Second Harvest food bank have found. Using hundreds of community interviews and data modeling, a new study suggests that 26.8% of the population – almost 720,000 people – qualify as “food insecure” based on risk factors such as missing meals, relying on food banks or food stamps, borrowing money for food, or neglecting bills and rent in order to buy groceries. Nearly a quarter are families with children.</p> <p>“We call it the Silicon Valley paradox,” says Steve Brennan, the food bank’s marketing director. “As the economy gets better we seem to be serving more people.” Since the recession, Second Harvest has seen demand spike by 46%.</p> <p>The bank is at the center of the Silicon Valley boom – both literally and figuratively. It sits just half a mile from Cisco’s headquarters and counts Facebook’s Sheryl Sandberg among its major donors. But the need it serves is exacerbated by this industry’s wealth; as high-paying tech firms move in, the cost of living rises for everyone else.</p> <p>Food insecurity often accompanies other poverty indicators, such as homelessness. San Jose, Silicon Valley’s largest city, had a homeless population of more than 4,000 people during a recent count. They are hungry, too: research conducted by the Health Trust, a local not-for-profit, found food resources available to them are scattered and inadequate.</p>

The scale of the problem becomes apparent on a visit to Second Harvest, the only food bank serving Silicon Valley and one of the largest in the country. In any given month it provides meals for 257,000 people – 66m pounds of food last year. Inside its cavernous, 75,000 sq ft main warehouse space, boxes of produce stretched to the ceiling. Strip lights illuminated crates of cucumbers and pallets of sweet potatoes with a chilly glow. Volunteers in PayPal T-shirts packed cabbages and apples that arrived in boxes as big as paddling pools, while in the walk-in freezer turkeys waited to defrost.

Because poverty is often shrouded in shame, their clients' situations can come as a surprise. "Often we think of somebody visibly hungry, the traditional homeless person," Brennan said. "But this study is putting light on the non-traditional homeless: people living in their car or a garage, working people who have to choose between rent and food, people without access to a kitchen."

He added, "You're not thinking when you pick up your shirts from dry cleaning, or getting your landscaping done, or going to a restaurant, or getting your child cared for, 'is that person hungry?' It's very easy to assume they are fine."

Hunger and the housing crisis go hand-in-hand. In Santa Clara County, the median price of a family home has reached a new high of \$1.125m, while the supply of homes continues to shrink. A family of four earning less than \$85,000 is now considered low income. These realities mean food insecurity cuts across lines of race, age and employment status.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Tolls on I-405 collected \$44.5M 2yrs</b>
-----------------	--

<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://komonews.com/news/local/i-405-toll-lanes-have-collected-445-million-in-revenue-in-two-years">http://komonews.com/news/local/i-405-toll-lanes-have-collected-445-million-in-revenue-in-two-years</a>
---------------	---

<b>GIST</b>	<p>OLYMPIA, Wash. - The express toll lanes on Interstate 405 celebrated their two-year anniversary in September. It was a pilot project state lawmakers had authorized for two years - but it's still going.</p> <p>But in a two-year report, the Department of Transportation gave evidence to to the State Transportation Commission on Tuesday, as to why it's staying put.</p> <p>The report says \$44.5 million has been collected at the two year anniversary marker. That total consists of \$37.9 million in tolls, \$1.8 million in Good to Go! pass revenue, another \$1.5 million in other revenue and what may be a surprising number for some, \$3.2 million in civil penalties.</p> <p>"The revenue numbers are higher than expected for sure," said Ed Barry, Tolling Division Director for the WSDOT.</p> <p>One of the success goals set by the legislature was to collect enough revenue to pay for toll collection and administering the tolling project. It did way more than that.</p> <p>According to WSDOT, operation costs for the two years were \$15.7 million, which left a profit of \$28.8 million dollars that, by law, must go back into road project in the I-405 corridor - which stretches from Lynnwood through Bellevue to Renton.</p> <p>"This has nothing to do with, 'we are making the roads better,'" said David Hablewitz, co-founder of Stop405Tolls.org. "It has everything to do with, 'hey look at this cash cow,'"</p> <p>Another important milestone for success set by the legislature was to keep the toll lanes moving at a minimum of 45 miles per hour at least 90 percent of peak travel periods during the morning and afternoon.</p> <p>Officials told the Commission that has been happening over the last six months in at least three out of four segments of the tolls lanes.</p>
-------------	---

State numbers show the threshold is happening 94 percent of the time in all northbound lanes and 96 percent of the time southbound between Bothell and Bellevue.

But, southbound between Lynwood and Bothell it's happening only 63 percent during peak periods. Officials told the commission the additional shoulder lane during peak hours northbound, between Bothell and Lynwood that opened in April. helped improve northbound speeds.

Southbound doesn't have the additional shoulder lane for general purpose traffic and that's why the speeds are much slower officials told the commissioners.

"WSDOT is cherry picking some of these numbers, they are looking at portions of the freeway that look great," said State Representative Mark Harmsworth (R-Mill Creek), who has been a vocal critic of tolling.

Harmsworth said the DOT has been 'disingenuous' in how its presenting its information.

"They are also claiming they have higher throughput on 405 because of the tolls and that's just the case," he said.

The report say 69 percent of those tolled paid a rate between the lowest toll at \$0.75 to \$4, and 20 percent paid between \$4 and \$8. The state had said the maximum \$10 toll would be a rarity when the project started.

After two years, 11 percent of people tolled paid between \$8 and \$10. The state reported 19.9 million tolled trips during the two-year period, and the average toll during peak periods was \$2.82.

"Right now it's failing and the only way to get the speeds is to increase the tolls even further," said Harmsworth.

[Return to Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Helicopter window falls off; injures child</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.cbsnews.com/news/us-military-helicopter-window-okinawa-japan-school-injuring-boy/">https://www.cbsnews.com/news/us-military-helicopter-window-okinawa-japan-school-injuring-boy/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>TOKYO -- Japanese officials said a boy was injured in Okinawa on Wednesday when a metal window frame fell from a U.S. military helicopter, the second such incident in the past week on the southern island.</p> <p>Officials from the city of Ginowan said the window fell from a CH-53 transport helicopter and landed on a school playground, leaving a boy with minor arm injuries. About 50 children were outside the school next to the Marine Corps Air Station Futenma at the time.</p> <p>Last week, a part of another U.S. military helicopter fell on a nearby kindergarten roof, but no one was injured.</p> <p>The base in a crowded residential area in central Okinawa is a source of anti-U.S. military sentiment and safety concerns. Its planned relocation pushed by the Japanese and U.S. governments has been delayed for more than 20 years as many residents want it entirely off of Okinawa.</p> <p>The latest incidents could further fuel opposition to the U.S. military presence on Okinawa, where about half of 50,000 American troops are stationed and where local residents have expressed concerns about military crime and safety on the island.</p> <p>A Marine Corps CH-53 made an emergency landing on a farm and burned in October. Another helicopter belonging to Futenma crashed into a nearby university in 2004, injuring three U.S. crew members.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

HEADLINE	<b>12/12 Closing time for Toronto strip clubs</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-12-12/it-s-closing-time-for-toronto-s-strip-clubs">https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-12-12/it-s-closing-time-for-toronto-s-strip-clubs</a>
GIST	<p>Condos are killing the Toronto strip club. In a city that once had more than 60 bars with nude dancers, only a dozen remain, the rest replaced by condominiums, restaurants, and housewares stores. Demand for homes downtown and for the retailers that serve them is driving land prices to records, tempting owners of the clubs, most of which are family-run, to sell at a time when business is slowing.</p> <p>“Sometimes I feel like the last living dinosaur along Yonge Street,” says Allen Cooper, the second-generation owner of the famous—or infamous—Zanzibar Tavern. The former divorce lawyer says he has been approached by at least 30 suitors for his property in the past few years but is holding out for a “blow my socks off” offer. “I don’t know how many condos we’re going to get, but it seems like just a wall” of them, Cooper says. He wouldn’t disclose the price he’d sell at, but land deals nearby give a hint of what’s possible. Remington’s Men of Steel, a male dance club behind a heavy door, sold to KingSett Capital Inc., which last year flipped it to Cresford Developments as part of a bigger portfolio on that block that went for about C\$160 million (\$125 million), according to real estate data supplier Altus Group. That club is closing next year, to be replaced by a 98-story condo.</p> <p>It’s a similar story in other North American cities, where the demand for “exotic dancers” is cooling amid the rise of free porn and live video chats on the internet. In Toronto, massage parlors have proliferated elsewhere in the city, while arduous rezoning regulations and a rule restricting new strip-club licenses mean that once a joint shuts its doors, it isn’t likely to be replaced.</p> <p>City Councillor Michael Thompson is glad to see the clubs go. “In 2017, I don’t think that women need to be involved in these kinds of facilities as their only option,” says Thompson, chairman of the city’s economic development committee. “I don’t see them as viable businesses,” he says. (He visited one himself “many, many, many years” ago.) With Toronto’s sky-high real estate values, strip clubs “don’t offer the highest and best use for landlords and even some of the owners,” he says. Overall home prices in the city remain high despite easing in recent months; condo prices are up 18 percent from a year ago.</p> <p>The fading of the strip-club era can be seen in a five-block area along Yonge Street, near Toronto’s counterpart to Times Square, Yonge-Dundas Square. It was once dubbed Sin Strip for its neon-clad bars, sex shops, and movie theaters. Today there are about 20 development applications for condos and commercial buildings on the stretch. Club owners say the client mix has changed, even since the ’90s, with more women who come in groups or with partners. The traditional visitors remain: financial sector workers bringing clients or friends, mostly male, after a game. Cooper’s Zanzibar, with its three-story flashing signs, is one of the last remnants. The adult theater and a sex shop next door called it quits long ago.</p> <p>Farther north, an entire city block is a construction site as two condo towers and some retail space replace a strip of colorful and creaky buildings that once offered body piercing and pole-dancing shoes. “We target a very specific market, mostly men. We’re not a shopping destination, so more people doesn’t mean a lot more business,” says Bill Greer, general manager and three-decade veteran of the Brass Rail Tavern, a two-story club in the area. “I don’t think we’ll be around in 10 years’ time.” Just outside the Brass Rail’s doors, a 75-story residential tower opened this year on a piece of land that cost C\$53 million. An 80-story luxury tower is under construction following a C\$225 million deal for less than 1 acre, according to data from Altus.</p> <p>Adult-entertainment sites in Toronto have made way for a luxury townhouse complex, churches, a Sikh temple, a mosque, charities, and a furniture store visited by one of the Property Brothers of reality-TV fame. One midtown club, Cheaters Tavern, was renamed Mystique Lounge, then became a liquor store, and then a Kitchen Stuff Plus.</p> <p>Some owners say they aren’t going anywhere. “What am I going to do, sit at home and die?” asks Spiro Koumoudouros, owner of House of Lancaster. Koumoudouros sold his other strip club recently, three decades after a successful legal campaign he and his brother waged to allow fully nude dancers. Others, like Cooper, are willing to sell at the right price. The owner of Filmores Gentleman’s Club, who is also a</p>

	real estate investor, is open to proposals. And Caddy's, in the city's east end, is part of a land deal being marketed now. Toronto's dirty dozen may soon be whittled down to two or three.
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Arctic permafrost thawing faster rate</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/arctic-report-card-permafrost-thawing-faster-51739620?">http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/arctic-report-card-permafrost-thawing-faster-51739620?</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Permafrost in the Arctic is thawing at a faster clip, according to a new report released Tuesday.</p> <p>Water is also warming and sea ice is melting at the fastest pace in 1,500 years at the top of the world.</p> <p>The annual report released Tuesday by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration showed slightly less warming in many measurements than a record hot 2016. But scientists remain concerned because the far northern region is warming twice as fast as the rest of the globe and has reached a level of warming that's unprecedented in modern times.</p> <p>"2017 continued to show us we are on this deepening trend where the Arctic is a very different place than it was even a decade ago," said Jeremy Mathis, head of NOAA's Arctic research program and co-author of the 93-page report.</p> <p>Findings were discussed at the American Geophysical Union meeting in New Orleans.</p> <p>"What happens in the Arctic doesn't stay in the Arctic; it affects the rest of the planet," said acting NOAA chief Timothy Gallaudet. "The Arctic has huge influence on the world at large."</p> <p>Permafrost is the permanently frozen layer below the Earth's surface in frigid areas. Records show the frozen ground that many buildings, roads and pipelines are built on reached record warm temperatures last year nearing and sometimes exceeding the thawing point. That could make them vulnerable when the ground melts and shifts, the report said. Unlike other readings, permafrost data tend to lag a year.</p> <p>Preliminary reports from the U.S. and Canada in 2017 showed permafrost temperatures are "again the warmest for all sites" measured in North America, said study co-author Vladimir Romanovsky, a professor at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.</p> <p>Arctic sea ice usually shrinks in September and this year it was only the eighth lowest on record for the melting season. But scientists said they were most concerned about what happens in the winter — especially March — when sea ice is supposed to be building to its highest levels.</p> <p>Arctic winter sea ice maximum levels in 2017 were the smallest they've ever been for the season when ice normally grows. It was the third straight year of record low winter sea ice recovery. Records go back to 1979.</p> <p>About 79 percent of the Arctic sea ice is thin and only a year old. In 1985, 45 percent of the sea ice in the Arctic was thick, older ice, said NOAA Arctic scientist Emily Osborne.</p> <p>New research looking into the Arctic's past using ice cores, fossils, corals and shells as stand-ins for temperature measurements show that Arctic ocean temperatures are rising and sea ice levels are falling at rates not seen in the 1,500 years. And those dramatic changes coincide with the large increase in carbon dioxide levels in the air from the burning of oil, gas and coal, the report said.</p> <p>This isn't just a concern for the few people who live north of the Arctic Circle. Changes in the Arctic can alter fish supply. And more ice-free Arctic summers can lead to countries competing to exploit new areas for resources. Research also shows changes in Arctic sea ice and temperature can alter the jet stream, which is a major factor in U.S. weather.</p>

This is probably partly responsible for the current unusual weather in the United States that brought destructive wildfires to California and a sharp cold snap to the South and East, according to NOAA scientist James Overland and private meteorologist expert Judah Cohen.

"The Arctic has traditionally been the refrigerator to the planet, but the door of the refrigerator has been left open," Mathis said.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Hardship: sold NKorea brides in China</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/stay-flee-sold-nkorean-brides-face-hard-choices-51751747">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/stay-flee-sold-nkorean-brides-face-hard-choices-51751747</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>The North Korean woman drives a motorbike slowly down a narrow lane shaded by tall corn to the farmhouse where she lives with the disabled Chinese man who bought her.</p> <p>It's been 11 years since she was lured across the border by the prospect of work and instead trafficked into a life of hardship. In those years, she's lived with the dread that Chinese police will arrest her and send her back to be jailed and tortured in North Korea. She's struggled with the scorn of neighbors who see her as an outsider.</p> <p>But most of all, she's been haunted by grief and regret over the children she had to leave behind.</p> <p>"When I first came here, I spent all day drinking because I worried a lot about my kids in North Korea," said the woman, who asked to be identified only as S.Y. due to safety concerns. "I was quite out of my mind."</p> <p>Experts estimate that thousands, and perhaps tens of thousands, of North Korean women have been trafficked across the border and sold as brides since a crippling famine in North Korea killed hundreds of thousands of people in the mid-1990s. Brokers tell the women they can find jobs in China, but instead sell them to Chinese men, mostly poor farmers in three border provinces who struggle to find brides in part because Beijing's one-child policy led to the abortion of many female fetuses.</p> <p>Like S.Y., many of the women have children still in their homeland.</p> <p>Their plight is largely ignored, partly because the women almost never agree to interviews. The Associated Press spoke with seven trafficked North Korean women and three Chinese husbands.</p> <p>Because the women have been trafficked to China, they are living in the country illegally and have never officially married their husbands.</p> <p>Some of the North Koreans get along with their new families and are satisfied with their new life in China. Others are abused by their husbands or ignored or mocked by their new relatives and neighbors. Others have risked the perilous journey to South Korea — with some having to make the heart-wrenching choice to leave children behind again, this time in China.</p> <p>Two other North Korean women interviewed in western Liaoning province said their husbands treated them well, but others described abuse. One former bride who fled to South Korea said her Chinese husband tied her to a post for hours after she once tried to escape.</p> <p>The women who stay live with the worry of being arrested and repatriated to North Korea. They avoid traveling because they say authorities in recent years require citizens to show their ID cards before leaving the area. They speak little Chinese, have few local friends and don't enjoy the same social and medical benefits that ordinary Chinese have.</p>



They stay because of their half-Chinese children.

"My 10-year-old son knows his friends' (North Korean) mothers have all fled, so he's very obedient to me because he worries I could leave him too," said another North Korean woman from a village near where S.Y. lives. She asked to be identified by only her surname, Kim.

Chinese authorities, including the Ministry of Public Security in Beijing and police in the three provinces closest to North Korea where most of the women end up, did not respond to requests to comment on the plight of the trafficked brides.

A spokesman for the Foreign Ministry said in a written response that China has worked to fight the trafficking of women and children in recent years by strengthening laws, efforts that "have had noticeable results."

\_\_\_\_\_

#### THE BRIDES WHO FLEE

For North Korean brides who want out of Chinese towns, South Korea is a tempting option because of the promise of citizenship, resettlement money, almost-free apartments and no language problems.

But reaching South Korea requires a long, treacherous journey and once again putting trust in brokers. Some lie to their husbands and say they'll return after making money in South Korea. Some flee in the middle of the night. Often they have to leave their children behind.

Some of the women who fled to South Korea are conflicted — torn between the life they have made for themselves and the life they were sold into. A woman who fled to South Korea in 2006 has not contacted her Chinese family even though she has a son there because she was treated poorly.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Dictionary word of the year: feminism</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.cbsnews.com/news/feminism-merriam-webster-word-of-the-year-2017/">https://www.cbsnews.com/news/feminism-merriam-webster-word-of-the-year-2017/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>NEW YORK -- This may or may not come as a surprise: Merriam-Webster's word of the year for 2017 is "feminism."</p> <p>Yes, it's been a big year or two or 100 for the word. In 2017, searches for feminism increased 70 percent over 2016 on Merriam-Webster.com and spiked several times after key events, lexicographer Peter Sokolowski, the company's editor at large, told The Associated Press ahead of Tuesday's annual word reveal.</p> <p>There was the Women's March on Washington in January, along with sister demonstrations around the globe. And heading into the year was Democrat Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign and references linking her to white-clad suffragettes, along with her loss to President Donald Trump, who once boasted about grabbing women.</p> <p>The "Me Too" movement rose out of Harvey Weinstein's dust, and other "silence breakers" brought down rich and famous men of media, politics and the entertainment worlds.</p> <p>Feminism has been in Merriam-Webster's annual Top 10 for the last few years, including sharing word-of-the-year honors with other "isms" in 2015. Socialism, fascism, racism, communism, capitalism and terrorism rounded out the bunch. Surreal was the word of the year last year.</p> <p>"The word feminism was being use in a kind of general way," Sokolowski said by phone from the company's headquarters in Springfield, Massachusetts. "The feminism of this big protest, but it was also</p>

used in a kind of specific way: What does it mean to be a feminist in 2017? Those kinds of questions are the kinds of things, I think, that send people to the dictionary."

Feminism's roots are in the Latin for "woman" and the word "female," which dates to 14th century English. Sokolowski had to look no further than his company's founder, Noah Webster, for the first dictionary reference, in 1841, which isn't all that old in the history of English.

"It was a very new word at that time," Sokolowski said. "His definition is not the definition that you and I would understand today. His definition was, 'The qualities of females,' so basically feminism to Noah Webster meant femaleness. We do see evidence that the word was used in the 19th century in a medical sense, for the physical characteristics of a developing teenager, before it was used as a political term, if you will."

Webster added the word in revisions to his "An American Dictionary of the English Language." They were his last. He died in 1843. He also added the word terrorism that year.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Earth mysterious hum recorded</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.cbsnews.com/news/earth-hum-recorded-underwater/">https://www.cbsnews.com/news/earth-hum-recorded-underwater/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Far from the blaring cacophony of cities, towns and suburbs, there are far quieter soundtracks to be found - the murmurs of wind rustling grasses, rushing waves tumbling onto beaches, the creaking of tree branches and trunks.</p> <p>But underneath all that is yet another soundscape, a permanent, low-frequency drone produced by Earth itself, from the vibrations of ongoing, subtle seismic movements that are not earthquakes and are too small to be detected without special equipment.</p> <p>Earth is "humming." You can't hear it, but it's ongoing. And now scientists have measured that persistent hum from the ocean floor, for the first time.</p> <p>Most of the movements in the ground under our feet aren't dramatic enough for people to feel them. Earthquakes, of course, are the big exception, but Earth undergoes far more earthquakes globally than you might suspect -- an estimated 500,000 per year, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Of those, 100,000 are strong enough to be felt, and about 100 of those are powerful enough to cause damage.</p> <p>But even in the quiet periods between earthquakes, there's a whole lot of shaking going on.</p> <p>Since the 1990s, researchers have known that Earth is constantly vibrating with microseismic activity, known as "free oscillation," scientists reported in a new study describing new recordings of the phenomenon. Free oscillation creates a hum that can be detected anywhere on land by seismometers -- equipment used to detect and record vibrations.</p> <p>For years, the source of this perpetual humming stymied researchers, with some suggesting that the rhythmic ebb and flow of ocean waves that reached all the way down to the seafloor were responsible, while others attributed the vibration to collisions between ocean waves. Then, in 2015, scientists determined that both types of ocean movement played a part in keeping Earth vibrating, Live Science previously reported.</p> <p>While seismologists have recorded and measured Earth's hum on land, they had yet to capture evidence of the planet's sonic stylings from the ocean depths -- until now.</p> <p>Recently, scientists traveled to the seafloor in the Indian Ocean to capture the humming sound, using special spherical ocean seismometers. Between September 2012 and November 2013, the researchers</p>

<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	<p>deployed 57 free-fall seismometers around La Réunion Island to the east of Madagascar, over an area measuring about 772 square miles, they wrote in the study.</p> <p>Using filters, noise reduction and calculations, they isolated the hum from normal ocean noise levels generated by ocean wave motion and seafloor currents, and found "very clear peaks" that appeared consistently over the 11-month study period, and which appeared in the same amplitude range as measurements of the humming taken on land in Algeria, the scientists reported. They noted that the peaks occurred at several frequencies between 2.9 and 4.5 millihertz -- about 10,000 times lower than the human hearing threshold, which is 20 hertz.</p> <p>Capturing ocean recordings of Earth's hum will provide scientists with far more data than is currently available from readings taken on land, contributing to efforts to map the planet's interior, the researchers wrote in the study.</p>
--------------------------------------	--

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Russia: athletes in Olympics as 'neutral'</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/russia-olympic-athletes-compete-neutral-ban/story?id=51739161&amp;cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed">http://abcnews.go.com/International/russia-olympic-athletes-compete-neutral-ban/story?id=51739161&amp;cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Russia's Olympic Committee has voted to back a plan for its athletes to compete at 2018 Winter Olympics under a neutral flag. The move means that there will now likely be a sizeable Russian contingent competing when the Olympics take place in Pyeongchang, South Korea, this February.</p> <p>Last week, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) barred Russia from the upcoming Olympics as punishment for what it says was a systematic cover up of doping by country's athletes. The IOC said it would allow some individual Russian athletes to compete as neutrals, provided they could pass an IOC anti-doping panel. It was initially unclear whether that would be acceptable to the Russian authorities, who had previously threatened to boycott the Games.</p> <p>At a meeting in Moscow today, Russia's Olympic Committee voted unanimously to support its athletes wishing to participate in the Games. Speaking at a televised news conference after the meeting, the committee's head Alexander Zhukov said he expects around 200 athletes to be able to compete in Pyeongchang, though it would be up to the IOC to determine how many would be approved.</p> <p>A day before, the Russian Committee said that the majority of its athletes had expressed a desire to compete. Last week, president Vladimir Putin had seemed to clear the way when he said Russian authorities would place no obstacle in the path of those wishing to go.</p> <p>The Russian Olympic Committee president, Zhukov, said that his committee had decided to swallow the IOC punishment in order to let athletes compete, saying they "have taken the blow ourselves, so as to give athletes the chance to realize their Olympic dreams."</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

## Crime, Criminals

[Top of page](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Police guns are turning up in crimes</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://nondoc.com/2017/12/13/police-guns-community-pipeline/">https://nondoc.com/2017/12/13/police-guns-community-pipeline/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>In the last year, residents of Fort Worth, Texas, have watched as shootings spiked across the city.</p> <p>Month after month, new victims emerged: a woman killed in a mall parking lot, two toddlers accidentally shot outside a Chuck E. Cheese's, seven shot in a drive-by in a residential neighborhood. The 2016 murder rate was a 15-year high.</p>

The city's Police Department had a plan. "In an effort to get firearms off the streets, the Fort Worth Police Department is implementing a gun buyback program," the department announced May 18.

On a hot summer day six weeks later, nearly a dozen officers set up shop in an Aldi parking lot, offering a \$50 gift card to anyone who turned in a gun. It was the third buyback the department conducted since the program's announcement.

However, the police had competition. Skirting the edges of the parking lot, a group of men stood with homemade cardboard signs outbidding the police.

One man accompanied his daughter, who held a sign reading, "Sell my daddy your gun!" She stood next to another buyer, wearing a shirt reading, "Fuck your gun free zone." Another man clad in neon green waved dollar bills at passersby. The deals took place in less than a minute.

Police wanted guns off the streets. Instead, they'd created a makeshift gun bazaar.

There was another problem with their plan. While the Fort Worth Police Department was making a show of getting guns off the streets, it also was quietly supplying the public with guns.

Over the previous 10 years, the department has sold more than 1,100 of its used weapons to licensed gun dealers, which turn around and sell them to the public, according to department records. It isn't alone.

An investigation by Texas Standard and Reveal from The Center for Investigative Reporting has found that 21 of Texas' 50 largest law enforcement agencies sell their used weapons to the public, effectively creating a pipeline of guns flowing right back into communities.

The guns are attractive to buyers. They're well maintained, relatively new and often come at a nice discount. And they include caches of military-grade weapons. From the Garland Police Department to the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, law enforcement agencies unloaded hundreds of shotguns and semi-automatic rifles, including models such as the Mini-14 and AR-15.

The Dallas Police Department sold a batch of Colt Commando assault rifles. Fort Worth police offloaded fully automatic German-made MP5 submachine guns. The Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office shopped around an Uzi among prospective buyers before selling it at the rock-bottom price of \$250. It's a model that could fetch over \$3,000 at a public auction.

While some departments and the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives destroy their weapons in the name of public safety, police officials at these departments say they sell guns to afford newer and better weapons for their officers.

"I think the public would agree they want their police officers to have the best equipment," said Sgt. Marc Povero, a spokesman for the Fort Worth Police Department.

Jay Wachtel, a former ATF agent and lecturer at California State University, Fullerton, says departments that sell weapons are playing with fire.

"It's bullshit. You know instinctively when you put guns out there that they are going to get misused," Wachtel said. "Nobody that's gone through a police academy would not consider that possibility."

The public used to know when and how police guns turned up in crimes. However, those details now are shrouded in government secrecy, thanks to a 2003 law passed by Congress that prohibits the release of trace information.

"I fully recognize the fact that absolutely one of our guns could fall into the hands of a criminal," said Lubbock Police Chief Greg Stevens. In 2014, his department traded in over 400 weapons to upgrade its arsenal. "That chance isn't enough for me to change what is, in essence, a business decision."

	Stevens said he would change his mind if he learned definitively that one of his guns had been used in a crime. But an ATF spokesman said it's unlikely his agency could release that information, even to a police chief.
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Teen charged as adult in HS shooting</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://mynorthwest.com/843713/teen-boy-charged-as-adult-in-graham-school-shooting/">http://mynorthwest.com/843713/teen-boy-charged-as-adult-in-graham-school-shooting/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>TACOMA, Wash. (AP) — A 16-year-old boy has been charged with two counts of assault, drive-by shooting and unlawful possession of a firearm in connection with the shooting and wounding of two students outside a high school near Tacoma.</p> <p>Multiple news outlets reported Tuesday that the teen was charged as an adult in the Dec. 5 shooting that sent two Graham-Kapowsin High School students to a hospital.</p> <p>Charging documents say the day before the shooting, two girls argued in the school cafeteria. Documents say a male friend of one of the girls told the other girl's boyfriend something to the effect of, "You need to get control of your girl," which offended the boyfriend.</p> <p>Documents say the shooting happened the following day at a site of a fight arranged after the cafeteria argument.</p> <p>Documents say the suspect was among the people who had gathered to watch the fight.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 EU aims to link visa, crime databases</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/eu-aims-link-visa-crime-databases-boost-terror-51739735?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/eu-aims-link-visa-crime-databases-boost-terror-51739735?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>The European Union is planning to link together its border, visa and fingerprint databases to plug information gaps and better combat terrorism and international crime.</p> <p>The European Commission proposed Tuesday to upgrade the 28-nation bloc's information systems so that border officers or the Europol police agency can have fast access to more reliable data.</p> <p>EU Migration Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos says the plan aims "to close gaps and remove blind spots in our information systems."</p> <p>It would allow visa, police, customs or justice authorities to use one search portal with access to all various databases they currently have permission to use.</p> <p>The European Commission says the move wouldn't compromise data protection safeguards while making it easier to cross-check information or catch criminals using multiple or fake identities.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Russia official: fake bomb calls from Syria</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/fake-bomb-calls-beset-russia-coming-syria-51740195?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/fake-bomb-calls-beset-russia-coming-syria-51740195?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed</a>
<b>GIST</b>	A top Russian official says most of the fake bomb calls that have plagued cities across Russia have come from Syria.

	<p>Deputy Interior Minister Igor Zubov said Tuesday in remarks carried by Russian news agencies that most of the anonymous calls came from areas controlled by "terrorists" in Syria.</p> <p>Russia has waged a military campaign in Syria since September 2015, allowing Syrian President Bashar Assad's government to win back control over most of the country.</p> <p>Zubov said fake bomb threats have also come from Turkey, Ukraine, the U.S. and Canada, and a few calls came from the ex-Soviet nations of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.</p> <p>Russian officials say a slew of fake bomb calls have targeted 3,500 buildings in 190 Russian cities and led to the evacuation of more than 2.5 million people since September.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Bellingham: serial flashers at it again</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.kiro7.com/news/local/serial-flashers-at-it-again-in-bellingham-police-release-new-sketch/663121508">http://www.kiro7.com/news/local/serial-flashers-at-it-again-in-bellingham-police-release-new-sketch/663121508</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>BELLINGHAM, Wash. - Bellingham police say there is more than one serial flasher — and they're at it again.</p> <p>In just the last four days, there have been three incidents of men exposing themselves to women in public near the Western Washington University campus — but this has been happening since July.</p> <p>With a path that that goes straight to Western Washington's campus. RB's In and Out convenience store has a customer base that is almost solely college students.</p> <p>“Cup of noodles, lots of chips,” manager Janeah Burdick says of the typical purchases.</p> <p>And while Burdick says a 20-something man who fit that bill came in Saturday and bought the big sellers, he came back and quickly distinguished himself from the regulars; he exposed himself to the clerk.</p> <p>“She was obviously uncomfortable and she told him to leave,” Burdick said.</p> <p>He did, and Bellingham police are once again chasing a serial flasher or flashers.</p> <p>“We have at least two if not more people that are doing this,” explained Bellingham Police Sergeant Claudia Murphy.</p> <p>Since summer, Murphy says there have been 15 exposure incidents. They stopped in mid-November and started again late last week.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Man charged in Des Moines killing</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.seattlepi.com/local/crime/article/Man-charged-in-mysterious-Des-Moines-killing-12425513.php">http://www.seattlepi.com/local/crime/article/Man-charged-in-mysterious-Des-Moines-killing-12425513.php</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Prosecutors charged a 20-year-old man with murder Tuesday in the Nov. 10 slaying of a man who was shot in the head in his own Des Moines apartment.</p> <p>Malik Tupac Lee is accused of killing 21-year-old Elijah Day, who died about five days after he was shot, reports say.</p> <p>Lee wasn't arrested until Nov. 29, when he was caught with a gun that investigators determined fired the bullet recovered from the scene of Day's shooting.</p>

	The details of what led up to the shooting or the motive remain unclear.
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Mafia bust on Long Island; 7 arrests</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/12/13/mafia-bust-on-long-island-leads-to-7-men-charged.html">http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/12/13/mafia-bust-on-long-island-leads-to-7-men-charged.html</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>CENTRAL ISLIP, N.Y. – Federal authorities say they've charged seven men in a racketeering bust targeting illegal gambling and other mafia-related activities on Long Island.</p> <p>Newsday reports that the U.S. Attorney's Office says the men are members or associates of the Gambino and Bonanno organized crime families. All were arrested early Tuesday on the charges filed in federal court in Suffolk County.</p> <p>Prosecutors say the men ran gambling, loan sharking, drugs and other criminal operations for the mafia from January 2014 to this month. The investigation involved the Suffolk County police, the New York Police Department, the FBI and other federal agencies.</p> <p>Among those charged is 74-year-old John Ambrosio, of Huntington, described by prosecutors as an acting captain in the Gambino family who has been a fixture of organized crime on Long Island for decades. He pleaded not guilty.</p>
<a href="#">Return to Top</a>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 France complicit in Rwanda genocide?</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://www.cnn.com/2017/12/13/africa/french-officials-rwanda-genocide/index.html">http://www.cnn.com/2017/12/13/africa/french-officials-rwanda-genocide/index.html</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>(CNN)French officials were complicit in the 1994 genocide of Rwanda's Tutsi minority, and obstructed justice in subsequent investigations, according to a new report.</p> <p>The "Muse Report" written by Washington DC-based law firm Cunningham Levy Muse was commissioned by the government of Rwanda as part of its investigation into the role of French officials in the genocide, in which around 800,000 people were killed.</p> <p>The 52-page document draws on wide-ranging sources including diplomatic cables and witness testimonies to make a series of allegations.</p> <p>The report claims that French officials supplied weapons to government forces and militias implicated in massacres of Tutsis, despite having knowledge of these atrocities.</p> <p>French officials are also alleged to have provided support and shelter for Rwanda's interim government, whose leaders were subsequently convicted of genocide charges.</p> <p>The report further accuses the French government of obstructing justice after the genocide by failing to release vital documents, and failing to extradite or prosecute suspected war criminals living in France.</p> <p>"Senior French officials were aware of and aided the actions and goals of both the Habyarimana government (before the genocide) and the génocidaires who seized power," the report concludes.</p> <p>"A complete investigation into the full extent of the knowledge, conduct and complicity of French officials is warranted...There is no doubt that French archives are filled with documents and materials without which the full history of this era will never be known."</p> <p>The Foreign Minister of Rwanda Louise Mushikiwabo called on the French government to provide transparency and accountability.</p>

"The Muse Report exposes a damning summary of conduct by French officials in Rwanda during the 1990s and thereafter, and we agree with the report recommendation that a full investigation into the role of French officials in the genocide is warranted," she said.

"This is also an opportunity for French authorities to collaborate better with Rwanda in the pursuit of truth, justice and accountability regarding the genocide against the Tutsi."

The French government has not responded to a CNN request for comment, but at the outset of Rwanda's investigation into French culpability, the then Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said: "To say that the French army took part in genocide is a despicable lie that I will not tolerate."

Human Rights Watch Central Africa Director Ida Sawyer welcomed the call for clarity over French involvement, although she suggests the Muse Report is undermined by omitting criticism of the Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), the party of President Paul Kagame, which took power after the genocide.

"While the report is one-sided as it does not address abuses committed by the RPF, it rightly calls for a reckoning regarding France's role before and during the genocide," says Sawyer.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/13 Newtown coping 5yrs after massacre</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/sandy-hook-how-newtown-coping-five-years-after-massacre-n828591">https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/sandy-hook-how-newtown-coping-five-years-after-massacre-n828591</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>NEWTOWN, Conn. — "Twelve-fourteen" is shorthand for enduring pain in this town.</p> <p>Say those numbers and a knowing look passes across the faces of residents who were here when Adam Lanza murdered 20 first-graders and six school staffers at Sandy Hook Elementary School with a Bushmaster AR-15 rifle.</p> <p>Say those numbers and the past is cleaved into before and after, the way "9/11" still does for many Americans.</p> <p>On Thursday, it will be five years since Newtown became the unwilling epicenter of an ongoing national tragedy — the mass killing of innocents by gunmen armed with high-powered weapons.</p> <p>Some things have changed since then in this old New England town, which was built by English colonists on land purchased from the Pootatuck Native American tribe back in 1705.</p> <p>Several thousand more people, undeterred by what happened on Dec. 14, 2012, now call Newtown their home.</p> <p>The scene of Lanza's horrific crime is no more, and a new school has arisen in its place. The white frame house with green shutters on Yogananda Street where Lanza lived and claimed his first victim — his mother — has been demolished.</p> <p>But Newtown is still coming to grips with their bitter legacy.</p> <p>City leaders and residents say they refuse to be defined by the shooting. And yet, as interviews reveal, it is a town still mending. It is a town in which many are dismayed that the murders of so many children failed to stop the epidemic of deadly mass shootings that continues to plague America.</p> <p>Mary Ann Jacob, a Sandy Hook library clerk who is credited with saving the lives of 18 fourth-graders, likened Newtown to "an old-fashioned scale."</p>



“Sometimes it’s heavier with grief, sometimes it’s lighter,” she told NBC News. “But it’s always sort of on your shoulder and right there.”

Michael Kehoe, who was chief of police and one of the first witnesses to the aftermath of the massacre, echoed Jacob.

"Because I'm retired, I don't have to help prepare the community for the anniversary," Kehoe said. "But I'm aware of 12/14. I can't help being aware."

Earlier this month, the city held its annual tree lighting. In the years after Lanza, it became a kind of unofficial reminder for many about how the unthinkable had happened just as Newtown was gearing up for what for many should be the happiest time of the year.

This year, the city is also hosting a photo exhibit at the municipal center to mark the day. But beyond that there will be no speeches, no official memorial service.

“The community will engage in private reflection and remembrance,” said Lorrie Rodrigue, the town’s interim schools superintendent.

But there will be a poignant moment for anybody within earshot of downtown Newtown. At 9:36 a.m. Thursday, the same time that Lanza started shooting, the bells at St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church will start ringing.

They will be rung 26 times, once for each victim.

“I hate the word anniversary,” said Erin Nikitchyuk, a Sandy Hook parent. “This is not something that we celebrate.”

Like other Newtown residents, Nikitchyuk is dismayed that the murders weren’t a catalyst for gun-law reform, such as banning high-powered rifles like the one Lanza used. She said she has no use at all for the so-called truthers who popped up on social media — and have even ventured into Newtown — to peddle the bogus theory that the massacre was staged by the government to push gun control.

"I fortunately have not had to face them," she said. "But I do know that they've harassed people, families, and they're just not welcome."

Since Sandy Hook, there have been more than 1,500 mass shootings in the U.S. that have claimed more than 1,700 lives — many of them children, according to the Gun Violence Archive.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Australia stops pedophile from traveling</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/pedophile-stopped-sydney-airport-anti-sex-tourism-law-51753184?">http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/pedophile-stopped-sydney-airport-anti-sex-tourism-law-51753184?</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>A convicted child molester was prevented from flying overseas from Sydney Airport on Wednesday under new laws aimed at keeping Australian pedophiles from traveling to Southeast Asia for sex tourism.</p> <p>Laws that took effect on Wednesday prevent 20,000 convicted pedophiles listed on the Australian child sex offender register from leaving the country except for specific purposes approved by law enforcement agencies.</p> <p>Australian pedophiles are notorious for taking inexpensive vacations to nearby Southeast Asian and Pacific island countries to abuse children.</p> <p>Foreign Minister Julie Bishop would not say where the pedophile stopped in Sydney was headed. He was</p>

<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	<p>being questioned by police.</p> <p>It is now a federal crime punishable by up to five years in prison for registered child molesters to leave the country without law enforcement agencies' permission.</p> <p>About 320 convicted sex offenders left Australia last year without registering their plans with government authorities.</p> <p>"We are aware they have a high propensity to re-offend if they are in a country where they are not monitored and where child sex exploitation is rampant," Bishop told reporters.</p> <p>Around 2,500 new convicted pedophiles would be added to Australia's sex offender register each year and would lose their passports under the new laws.</p> <p>The register contains 3,200 serious offenders who will be banned from travel for life. Less serious offenders drop off the register after several years of complying with reporting conditions and would become eligible to have their passports renewed.</p> <p>Justice Minister Michael Keenan said the laws were the most comprehensive of their kind in the world.</p>
--------------------------------------	--

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 What is 'excited delirium'?</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.cbsnews.com/news/what-is-excited-delirium-and-how-should-police-react/">https://www.cbsnews.com/news/what-is-excited-delirium-and-how-should-police-react/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>SACRAMENTO — Concerns about "excited delirium" were addressed during a meeting of the police review commission in Sacramento, California, Monday night. The Sacramento Police Department says it is training officers how to deal with people exhibiting signs of the condition, which is described as an agitated state that could make an offender violent, CBS Sacramento reports.</p> <p>One incident happened earlier this year in the city near a drug store.</p> <p>Investigators said 34-year-old Johnny Hernandez exhibited signs of excited delirium when he tried to run from police.</p> <p>He was subdued with batons and a tasered; his mother claims officers almost killed him.</p> <p>"It could've given him a heart attack and all of that was unnecessary. It was excessive, excessive force," said Debbie Hernandez.</p> <p>Sacramento Police told the police commission Monday that those who exhibit signs of the condition appear to have super-human strength and are difficult to subdue.</p> <p>"All these non-lethal things used on these subjects that we are dealing with, they're not feeling any pain," said Deputy Chief Ken Bernard.</p> <p>"We'll see people who are beginning to disrobe, profusely sweating, acting erratically. These are kind of signs that we train our officers to look for," said Detective Eddie Macaulay.</p> <p>Excited delirium — also known as agitated delirium — is not listed as a recognized medical diagnosis in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), the guidebook for psychiatric treatment. But doctors familiar with the phenomenon describe it as "characterized by agitation, aggression, acute distress and sudden death," often in police custody, before a person can get to the hospital.</p> <p>According to researchers from the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine, symptoms include "bizarre and/or aggressive behavior, shouting, paranoia, panic, violence toward others, unexpected</p>

	<p>physical strength and hyperthermia." They say it is often associated with stimulant drug use.</p> <p>Some have raised concerns that the condition could be used as an excuse when an arrest goes wrong.</p> <p>"It's almost exclusively used in police-force cases," Eric Balaban, senior counsel with the American Civil Liberties Union's National Prison Project, told the Washington Post in 2015. "There seems to be a high correlation between its use by medical examiners and in-custody deaths."</p> <p>Macaulay said Sacramento officers have been trained not just to recognize the signs, but how to react.</p> <p>"To get that person in custody to get them to the medical attention that could potentially save their life," he said.</p> <p>A person experiencing the agitated state may see their internal body temperature spike above 103 degrees at times, and it can lead to cardiac arrest and death.</p> <p>According to Sacramento police, excited delirium is related to one in-custody death, on average, per year in the city.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>12/12 Man w/pellet gun attempts school entry</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="http://abcnews.go.com/US/police-shoot-injure-suspect-carrying-pellet-gun-attempted/story?id=51743152">http://abcnews.go.com/US/police-shoot-injure-suspect-carrying-pellet-gun-attempted/story?id=51743152</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>An Atlanta police officer shot and injured a man who appeared to be armed with a weapon and was attempting to access a middle and high school, officials said.</p> <p>School officials contacted the Atlanta Public Schools Police Department when they saw the man enter school grounds and approach Forrest Hills Academy in Atlanta's Hammond Park neighborhood with the apparent weapon Thursday morning, Georgia Bureau of Investigation Public Information Officer Nelly Miles said in a press conference today.</p> <p>When officers arrived on campus, they observed the apparent weapon as the man was leaving the premises, and an officer fired one round at him, Miles said. It is unclear if the suspect pulled or pointed the apparent weapon at officers, but he did not fire it, she said.</p> <p>Authorities later determined that the suspect was armed with a pellet gun, the GBI said in a press release.</p> <p>The suspect, whose name was not released, was transported to Atlanta's Grady Memorial Hospital to be treated for his injuries, Miles said, adding that investigators were interviewing him at the hospital.</p> <p>The Atlanta Public Schools Police Department has issued arrest warrants for the suspect for having a weapon on school property, Miles said. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation was contacted because the case involves an officer-involved shooting, Miles said.</p>
<p><a href="#">Return to Top</a></p>	

**Information From Online Communities and Unclassified Sources/InFOCUS is a situational awareness report published daily by the Washington State Fusion Center.**

**If you no longer wish to receive this report, please submit an email to [intake@wsfc.wa.gov](mailto:intake@wsfc.wa.gov) and enter UNSUBSCRIBE InFOCUS in the Subject line.**

**DISCLAIMER** - the articles highlighted within InFOCUS is for informational purposes only and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Washington State Fusion Center, the City of Seattle, the Seattle Police Department or the Washington State Patrol and have been included only for ease of reference and academic purposes.

**FAIR USE Notice** - All rights to these copyrighted items are reserved. Articles and graphics have been placed within for educational and discussion purposes only, in compliance with 'Fair Use' criteria established in Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976. The principle of 'Fair Use' was established as law by Section 107 of The Copyright Act of 1976. 'Fair Use' legally eliminates the need to obtain permission or pay royalties for the use of previously copyrighted materials if the purposes of display include 'criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research.' Section 107 establishes four criteria for determining whether the use of a work in any particular case qualifies as a 'fair use'. A work used does not necessarily have to satisfy all four criteria to qualify as an instance of 'fair use'. Rather, 'fair use' is determined by the overall extent to which the cited work does or does not substantially satisfy the criteria in their totality. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use,' you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

For more information go to: <<http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml>>

**THIS DOCUMENT MAY CONTAIN COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL. COPYING AND DISSEMINATION IS PROHIBITED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNERS.**

**Source: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml>**

[Return to Top](#)