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Event Calendar

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Date	Event	Location/Time	Other Information
9-13 Apr 2018	LEIU/IALEIA Training Event	Marriott Hotel, 700 West Convention Way Anaheim, CA 92801 (714) 750-8000	http://www.ialeia.org/2018_conference.php
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Events, Opportunities

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HEADLINE	01/24 Flu season gets worse, costs climb
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/flu-season-gets-worse-costs-are-climbing/
GIST	<p>This season's flu outbreak is becoming more widespread and even more deadly. For employers and employees alike, that means it's becoming more expensive in terms of lost productivity and health care costs.</p> <p>The widespread 2017-2018 flu season may cost U.S. employers \$9.42 billion, according to a January estimate from outplacement and executive coaching firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas. That's based on workers taking four sick days to recover.</p> <p>Yet workplace rules, such as requiring employees to get vaccinated, can be tricky for management, said Aaron Holt, a labor and employment lawyer at Cozen O'Connor in Houston. How such requirements are crafted can be important.</p> <p>Just this month, a hospital in North Carolina settled with Christian and Muslim employees who were fired after refusing to get a flu shot based on their religious beliefs. The hospital agreed to make a "real effort to provide a reasonable religious accommodation," according to a statement from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.</p> <p>"Employers should be really cautious about having hard and fast rules with regards to a flu vaccine or how sick a person claims to be," attorney Holt said. "Make sure that you're constantly updating your policies."</p> <p>A company might decide to craft a temporary policy just for the flu season, limiting the amount of sick days it will offer for a specific time period, or decide to use temporary workers if the number of employees with the flu are out, he said.</p> <p>How your boss responds may depend on where you live. Seven states plus Washington, D.C., require paid sick leave, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. No federal laws mandate employer-paid sick leave, according to the NCSL.</p> <p>So it might not be surprising that a 2016 survey from Staples showed 79 percent of employees went to work sick even though they were knowledgeable about the flu and how it's spread. About 58 percent surveyed knew cold and flu viruses can live on a surface for up to three days, according to the survey of 1,500 office workers conducted by Morar Consulting.</p> <p>To calculate its multibillion dollar cost estimate, Challenger took illnesses for people over 18 from the previous flu seasons, used the current employment-population ratio of 60.1 percent and an average hourly wage of \$26.63. The firm then applied those metrics to an estimate of more than 11 million employed adults missing eight-hour shifts to reach its figure.</p> <p>About 6.3 percent of all American doctor visits were attributed to the flu virus in the week ended Jan. 13, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That's already bigger than other recent outbreaks, in part because this year's illnesses are tied more closely to the H3N2 virus, a particularly nasty bug for which flu vaccines aren't yet as effective as for some other strains.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Seattle police issue tickets to homeless
SOURCE	https://www.seattlepi.com/seattlenews/article/Seattle-police-ticket-homeless-500-12499592.php
GIST	Seattle has spent millions and worked tirelessly to come up with solutions to elevate people experiencing homelessness out of poverty and off the streets. Compassion has been among the chief guiding principals

since officials declared a homelessness emergency.

So how was it that a handful of Seattle police officers in December issued trespassing tickets to homeless people in the Ballard Commons park?

The tickets were pointless, issued on a city code that Seattle Municipal Court couldn't enforce even if those ticketed could pay the fines. Will Lemke, communications director for the city's homelessness response, said the few people who received the citations won't be subject to fines or any other action.

Only, they don't know that yet.

"Like the city's sweeps, ticketing individuals for living and keeping their belongings outside wrongly criminalizes homelessness," said Doug Honig, communications director for the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington. "And what sense does it make to ticket people who don't have the means of paying the ticket?"

The ACLU chapter is already pursuing a lawsuit against the city and the state Department of Transportation over the city's sweeps of unsanctioned encampments. Honig said that tickets — even those that don't amount to a fine — only "exacerbate the problems caused by current city policies which chase homeless people from place to place."

The officers who issued the tickets weren't part of the city's Navigation Teams tasked with contacting people in unauthorized camps and connecting them with services before camps are cleared out. The team includes specially trained Seattle police officers along with other outreach workers.

Nobody knows where the people who got the tickets might be.

Lemke said the Navigation Team would work with police to track down the people to tell them their tickets were, in fact, meaningless.

Until then, the ticket recipients likely think they owe the city \$500, even as they have no place to live.

Why Seattle police officers issued the tickets on a municipal code that refers to street use remains a mystery. Seattle Police Department spokesman Sgt. Sean Whitcomb didn't respond to requests for comment about the tickets.

Last December, reports surfaced on Twitter that Seattle police officers had given \$500 "trespassing" tickets to people who had been living in tents at Ballard Commons. Tweets about an impending sweep there, posted by freelance writer and activist Dae Shik Kim Hawkins, included the report of the tickets.

In a Dec. 24 column in the South Seattle Emerald, Hawkins detailed a number of instances where police not associated with the Navigation Teams visited homeless camps, including the instance in Ballard.

Police visiting a Ravenna Woods camp the day before it was set to be swept told Hawkins they were in the area and that it was known as a high-crime area. They were conducting "proactive law enforcement," the officer told Hawkins.

Seattle has had its share of troubles addressing homelessness.

The numbers of homeless people on city streets has grown dramatically over the last five years, reaching crisis levels in 2015, if not sooner, and triggering a declaration of emergency.

As of last January, more than 8,000 people were homeless in Seattle, 3,857 of those without shelter, according to the Count Us In point-in-time count conducted by All Home King County.

Meanwhile, the city plans to spend \$63 million on services for people experiencing homeless this year, up

	from \$39 million five years ago.
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HEADLINE	01/23 DHS enforces REAL ID requirements
SOURCE	https://homelandprepnews.com/stories/26348-dhs-begins-enforcement-real-id-requirements-state-issued-drivers-licenses-identification-cards/
GIST	<p>All 50 states and all but one U.S. territories are on schedule to meet “REAL ID” requirements for driver’s licenses and identification cards to prevent fraud by terrorists and other perpetrators, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced last week.</p> <p>DHS began to enforce compliance with REAL ID requirements on Monday. Of the 56 U.S. states and territories, 98 percent are in compliance or have received a deadline extension of Oct. 10 for compliance.</p> <p>The 9/11 Commission recommended security enhancements to state-issued driver’s licenses and identification cards to prevent terrorists from using fraudulent identification to travel around the country undetected. Congress approved the REAL ID Act in 2005, which established minimum security standards for ID cards.</p> <p>“This includes incorporating anti-counterfeiting technology, preventing insider fraud, and using documentary evidence and record checks to ensure a person is who he or she claims to be,” DHS said in a statement. “It also prohibits federal agencies from accepting non-compliant licenses and identification cards for access to federal facilities, nuclear power plants, and commercial aircraft. The goal of REAL ID is to improve the reliability and accuracy of state-issued driver’s licenses and identification cards used for federal official purposes.”</p> <p>American Samoa is the only state or territory that was not on track to meet REAL ID requirements.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Troubling elements of illegal immigration
SOURCE	http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/illegal-immigration-numbers-ms-13-exploding-1100-border-arrests-a-day-1m-on-deport-list/article/2646876
GIST	<p>The White House is steeling for battle with Democrats and moderate Republicans over immigration reform, raising new concerns that the illegal population is out of control — and violent.</p> <p>The White House released Homeland Security numbers about the troubling elements of illegal immigration created by legal loopholes that have helped to expand the killer MS-13 gang is expanding.</p> <p>“Immigration — The Need To Secure Our Border,” was the header on the latest White House email briefing in the escalating war on lax immigration rules.</p> <p>Under the words “By the numbers,” the White House provided this list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On average, DHS apprehends over 1100 people a day crossing the border illegally, with December marking the eighth month in a row of an increase in apprehensions at the border. • On January 14th, DHS saw the highest number of apprehensions in a year – 1400. • DHS refuses entry to 7 known or suspected terrorists every day, 50 every week, 2,500 every year. • 622% increase in family units detained at the border since April. Most will be released after no more than 20 days. • Officials apprehended 8,000 Family Units in December. • 306% increase in unaccompanied alien children detained at the border since April. Most will be released after no more than 20 days. • Officials apprehended over 4,000 UACs in December • 95% of family units and unaccompanied children who are released pending a hearing NEVER

	<p>show.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,700% increase in the number of credible fear screening referrals from 2008 to 2016. • As of December there were 307,555 backlogged asylum cases. Applicants can wait up to 4 years for an interview. • As of October, Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) backlog of cases stood at approximately 640,000. Without a hearing there is no resolution for years – only to be removed later. • The median case completion time for non-detained cases is 535 days. • Roughly 628,000 aliens overstayed their visa in Fiscal Year 2016 alone. • As of May 2016, there were 950,062 aliens with final orders of removals on ICE’s national docket. • These legal loopholes have contributed to the growth of MS-13 and put many American communities in danger, while imposing significant burdens on schools and other community resources.
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HEADLINE	01/24 Conflicting Calif. mudslide warnings sent
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/8f181cdb26be4178a321b373ac5b5dce/Report:-Conflicting-California-mudslide-warnings-issued
GIST	<p>SANTA BARBARA, Calif. (AP) — In the days before mudslides devastated California neighborhoods, officials released conflicting evacuation orders that left some hard-hit neighborhoods out of the warning zone, a newspaper reported Tuesday.</p> <p>The Santa Barbara County Sheriff’s Office had posted on its website and on Facebook a list of voluntary and mandatory evacuation areas for the coastal town of Montecito, the Los Angeles Times reported.</p> <p>A separate map on the county’s website showed a larger voluntary evacuation zone that included homes not covered by the sheriff’s list.</p> <p>Of the 21 people killed in the mudslide, at least a dozen lived in areas that were covered by the county’s evacuation map but not included in the Sheriff’s Office warnings, according to records reviewed by the newspaper.</p> <p>County officials acknowledged the discrepancy while emphasizing the many other measures taken to warn residents of the approaching storm — including emails, social media alerts, press releases and deputies going door to door in some areas.</p> <p>“Regrettably, however, also 30 hours prior to the storms arrival, I approved a press release and Facebook that had discrepancies with the western boundary of our intended voluntary evacuation area,” Robert Lewin, San Barbara County’s director of the Office of Emergency Management, said in a statement.</p> <p>The county issued both mandatory and voluntary evacuation warnings 30 hours before the storm through an alerting system, county spokeswoman Gina DePinto said in a statement.</p> <p>People were urged to go to an interactive map that accurately provided the locations of the evacuation areas and it received tens of thousands of views, she said.</p> <p>In addition, the county sent out about 226,000 text and email messages and telephone calls, DePinto said.</p> <p>Officials emphasized that all those who died were in a voluntary or mandatory evacuation zone and that the warnings probably saved more lives.</p> <p>Questions remain about whether a broader evacuation warning would have made a difference. Officials estimated that only 15 percent of the residents in the mandatory evacuation zone left the area.</p>

	<p>Authorities lifted some evacuation orders and advisories on the western edge of Montecito starting at midday Tuesday. Utilities may still be out and a “boil water” notice remains in effect, officials said.</p> <p>Large swaths of the hillside enclave remain evacuated as crews continue to remove mud and boulders and rebuild drainage pipes and power lines. Officials said over the weekend that it would be a gradual process getting residents back into homes.</p> <p>Gov. Jerry Brown declared Monday a “Day of Remembrance of the Montecito Mudslides” and ordered flags flown at half-staff over the state Capitol.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Capitol bldg. named to honor a woman
SOURCE	http://www.thenewstribune.com/news/politics-government/article196059164.html
GIST	<p>The new office building on Olympia’s Capitol Campus has been named after former Democratic state lawmaker Helen Sommers, marking the first time lawmakers have named a campus building after a woman.</p> <p>The state Legislature approved a resolution last week to christen the offices at 106 11th Avenue after Sommers, who died in 2017 at age 84.</p> <p>The resolution passed this year following a protracted fight over the name in 2017 between Republicans and Democrats that also held up a symbolic tribute to the late Sen. Andy Hill. Hill, a Redmond Republican, died after a recurrence of lung cancer in 2016 at age 54.</p> <p>Senate Republican Leader Mark Schoesler of Ritzville has long argued the 106 11th Avenue Building was irresponsibly expensive and that Sommers — who had been a budget writer with a reputation as a fiscal moderate — would have disliked it.</p> <p>Democrats, led by state Rep. Eileen Cody of Seattle, said naming the new building after Sommers would be a fitting tribute.</p> <p>Republicans held a voting majority the Senate in 2017, but Democrats won full control of the Legislature in a special election last fall, paving the way for the building to be named after Sommers.</p> <p>When Sommers “was first elected in 1972, there were only 12 women on the floor at that time,” Cody said in a floor speech last week before the building name was approved in the House. “So I think it’s very appropriate that she would be the first woman that gets a building on the Capitol Campus named after her.”</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Record year for Spokane airport
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/878019/spokane-airport-set-passenger-records-last-year/
GIST	<p>SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — Last year was a record year for business at Spokane International Airport.</p> <p>More than 3 million passengers traveled through the airport last year, and they brought more than 72,000 tons of luggage with them.</p> <p>KXLY-TV reports that the total passenger count of 3.5 million for 2017 beat the previous record of 3.4 million set in 2007.</p> <p>For cargo, the 2017 total of more than 72,000 tons exceeded the record set in 2015 of 69,000 tons.</p>

	<p>Airport board chair Nancy Vorheez attributes the records to the investment by American, Southwest, and United Airlines in new, nonstop services to several U.S. cities.</p> <p>Vorheez says the airport expects the return of Frontier Airlines with service to Denver beginning in April.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Fire chief: Alaska quake more than 1min.
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/877218/7-9-earthquake-in-alaska/
GIST	<p>A tsunami watch that was in effect for the Washington coast after a 7.9 magnitude earthquake off the coast of Alaska was canceled by the National Weather Service.</p> <p>The cancellation came at 4:18 a.m.</p> <p>The earthquake was recorded around 12:30 a.m. about 170 miles southeast of Kodiak Island in the Gulf of Alaska. It had a preliminary magnitude of 8.2 but has been downgraded to magnitude 7.9.</p> <p>A fire chief in Alaska told The Associated Press that the earthquake went on for up to 90 seconds.</p> <p>“Boy, I hope this stops soon because it’s just getting worse,” he said.</p> <p>There have been at least 10 aftershocks.</p> <p>Parts of south and southeast Alaska were under a tsunami warning, but now only south Alaska and the Alaska peninsula are under an advisory.</p> <p>Overnight evacuations happened in Kodiak, Alaska. People awoke to warnings to get to higher elevations.</p> <p>Larry LeDoux, superintendent of the Kodiak Island Borough School District, says schools were open as shelters and estimated there were about 500 people at the high school.</p> <p>According to the United States Geological Service, the earthquake was the result of strike slip faulting where the Pacific plate is converging with the North American plate.</p> <p>USGS says over the last 100 years, 11 other earthquakes of magnitude 7 or larger have occurred within 600km of Tuesday’s quake.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Gov.’s battle against carbon pollution
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/876575/jay-inslee-carbon-pollution/
GIST	<p>One reason Washington’s governor is pushing for a tax on carbon pollution is to nudge the state’s economy.</p> <p>“The people who, today, have access to electric cars pay zero for the price of gas,” Washington State Governor Jay Inslee told KIRO Radio’s Dave Ross. “That’s a pretty good deal. Every major manufacturer now is offering electric cars, and it is our goal to help Washingtonians have more access to that technology; to pay zero for gasoline ... this will accelerate that. It’s happening very quickly. In Norway today, 50 percent of all vehicles sold are electric vehicles.”</p> <p>As lawmakers in Olympia meet for their annual session, Inslee is spearheading an effort to establish a carbon tax. Though it will target the state’s biggest polluters, most residents will notice its effects at the gas pump where an increase of up to 18 cents or more will be possible. Inslee argues this will encourage</p>

investments that will reduce energy costs and get people into the cars of the future. For example, Volvo is one company that won't be producing gas-powered automobiles after 2019.

The governor says that Washington isn't alone in the effort. About eight Northeastern states have similar taxes aimed at their electrical grid. Washington's neighbor British Columbia has one, too. He also notes that 15 states — 40 percent of the nation's economy — are committed to reducing carbon pollution. The side benefit of all this will be an economy for the next generation, Inslee says.

"British Columbia has a carbon charge on carbon pollution and they have the best economy in Canada," he said. "... we have found that a well-generated system actually increases your economic growth rather than decreases it ... I think that's been proven around the world where it's been taken and you don't have to go very far. You just go to British Columbia and look at their experience which is very positive."

Washington is already investing in such next-generation businesses. Inslee points to Moses Lake where a carbon fiber plant makes materials for electric cars; Mukilteo where the world's largest vanadium batteries are produced; or Bellingham where Itek manufactures solar panels.

Carbon pollution and offshore drilling

As Inslee pushes for a carbon tax, a battle has erupted on another front — Washington's coast where the Trump administration has proposed offshore oil drilling. Upon hearing of the president's wish to open the coasts to oil drilling, Inslee began making phone calls.

One major objection is that it appears states, where Trump's political allies live, can easily be exempt from offshore drilling.

"The president's action (is) just giving his political buddies in Florida the continued protection and stripping Washington state and everybody on the West Coast," Inslee said. "I've spoken to Secretary (of the Interior Ryan) Zinke about this last week. I said that I understand that the president has a golf course in Florida and he's a friend of the governor, but our state is a beautiful place as well."

"I said, 'Are you telling me that the beaches in Florida are better than Washington's?' He said 'no.' I said 'Are you telling me that our recreational industry is less important than Florida's?' He said 'no.' I said, 'Are you telling me that somehow an oil spill in Florida isn't less devastating than one in Washington?' He said 'no.' I said, 'What possible reason could you have for thinking about this?' And he gave me no explanation whatsoever."

Inslee, however, has doubts that Washington will see any offshore drilling. There is significant political opposition to the idea from both parties. And he believes the industry is moving away from it.

"I don't know what the White House is thinking here," Inslee said. "Maybe it's tweeting gone wild. I don't know."

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HEADLINE	01/23 Prepare for 'parade of frontal systems'
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/877569/prepare-for-a-parade-of-frontal-systems-in-washington/
GIST	Several weather systems are en route to the West Coast in what the National Weather Service is calling a "parade of frontal systems." Meteorologist Dustin Guy says a strong system is approaching the Puget Sound region, which will result in heavy rain in the lowlands and snow in the mountains. A Flood Watch is in effect for portions of Northwest Washington, including Mason County.

	<p>A Winter Storm Warning for the Cascades is in effect until 6 a.m. Wednesday about 2,000 feet.</p> <p>A Wind Advisory for the north interior and San Juan Islands is in effect until 6 p.m. Tuesday. Sustained winds of up to 35 mph and gusts up to 45 mph are possible.</p> <p>KIRO 7 Meteorologist Nick Allard says we will get a short break on Wednesday with a few showers. The next system is expected to move in Thursday, with rain continuing through the weekend.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Hamas: US prefers Israel over Arabs
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/latest-pence-us-aims-pull-iran-nuke-deal-52542693?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>The Latest on Vice President Mike Pence's visit to Israel (all times local):</p> <p>2:50 p.m.</p> <p>The top Islamic Hamas leader is accusing the United States of preferring its alliance with Israel over its interests in other parts of the Middle East.</p> <p>Ismail Haniyeh says Tuesday that U.S. Vice President Mike Pence's tour in Israel was "unwelcome," adding that his speech before the Israeli parliament a day earlier "proves the USA has a strategic alliance with the Zionist entity."</p> <p>America "doesn't take the interests and requirements of the Islamic and Arab nation into consideration," Haniyeh said in a televised speech from Gaza, which his militant group controls.</p> <p>He accused the Trump administration of targeting "the principles of the Palestinian cause" by recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital and cutting funds to UNRWA, the United Nations agency responsible for Palestinians refugees and their descendants.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Ecuador laments 'nuisance' of Assange
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/julian-assange-nuisance-ecuador-lenin-moreno-wikileaks-london-embassy/
GIST	<p>QUITO, Ecuador -- Ecuador's president has lashed out at WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange even as he contends his government is working behind the scenes to help him out of the Ecuadorean embassy in London.</p> <p>Lenin Moreno said in a televised interview Sunday that Assange had become "more than a nuisance" after he violated terms of his asylum by interfering in other countries' political affairs.</p> <p>Ecuador granted citizenship to Assange this month in an unsuccessful attempt to provide him diplomatic immunity so he could evade arrest in Britain. Moreno said other countries and "important personalities" he didn't name are working to mediate a solution.</p> <p>Assange in 2012 sought refuge in the embassy to avoid extradition to Sweden over sex-related claims. Sweden dropped the case but Assange still faces arrest in Britain for jumping bail.</p> <p>Assange confirmed late last year that WikiLeaks was approached by a data firm working for Donald Trump's presidential campaign during the 2016 election.</p> <p>Assange said on Twitter that Cambridge Analytica had reached out to his group prior to November 2016,</p>

	but WikiLeaks rejected the company's "approach." Assange didn't specify the content of that approach.
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HEADLINE	01/23 Uncertainty Rattlesnake Ridge slide
SOURCE	http://komonews.com/news/local/experts-now-uncertain-of-when-rattlesnake-ridge-landslide-will-fall
GIST	<p>UNION GAP, Wash. - A landslide on Rattlesnake Ridge is now moving at a steady rate, but experts say it is not clear when the landslide will fall.</p> <p>Landslide movement has not accelerated, and is moving at a rate of 1.6 to 1.7 feet per week, Emergency Management Director Jeff Emmons said at a press briefing given January 23.</p> <p>Emmons spoke on the uncertainty in predicting the amount of time it would take for the 20 acres of land to fall. Emergency Management officials previously anticipated the landslide event would occur by late March of 2018.</p> <p>"The current prediction is it's going to keep moving at this rate for a while, don't know what that 'for a while' means," Emmons said. "Couple months, but this is going to be a wait and see and monitor it."</p> <p>The Office of Emergency Management is also re-evaluating a worst-case scenario for the landslide, as rockfall would not likely block the Yakima River completely.</p> <p>At this time, some rocks have been pushed into the quarry pit. No large amounts of rocks have fallen onto Thorp Road, where people have evacuated their homes, according to emergency officials.</p> <p>Emmons said although the slide is not moving faster, it's still moving and safety precautions need to be taken.</p> <p>Officials said a section of I-82 along the ridge is safe to drive, but WSDOT has planned routes in case of a catastrophic event. If I-82 closed, traffic would be detoured at US 97 from Granger to Union Gap.</p> <p>Emmons is urging families of the county to prepare for the disaster if they haven't already.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 San Francisco Indigenous Peoples Day
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2018/01/24/san-francisco-changes-columbus-day-to-indigenous-peoples-day.html
GIST	<p>San Francisco's Board of Supervisors voted Tuesday to rename Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day to honor the Native Americans here before Columbus "discovered" America and who became victims of the country's subsequent colonization.</p> <p>Malia Cohen, a member on the board, led the legislation which was voted on 10-to-1 in favor of the change.</p> <p>Aaron Peskin—representing the historically Italian North Beach neighborhood—was the sole vote against the change. Some Italian-Americans bristled at the vote and said they're losing the holiday meant to celebrate their unique heritage.</p> <p>"This is an insult to the Italians who have done so much for the city of San Francisco," Christina Olivolo, a member of an Italian Women's club in San Francisco, told The San Francisco Examiner after the vote.</p> <p>She told the paper she was fine with removing Columbus' name from the holiday, sympathizing with the</p>

	<p>indigenous people who were victims of colonization, but preferred to call it “Italian Heritage Day” as a way to continue honoring people of Italian descent.</p> <p>Norman Yee, another board member, said he hopes the board can find another way to honor Italian-Americans.</p> <p>San Francisco joined at least 55 other cities, including Los Angeles and Minneapolis, in renaming the holiday to celebrate the people predating the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the Americas.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/24 Experts warn on NKorea missile tests
SOURCE	<p>https://www.nbcnews.com/news/north-korea/north-korea-s-missile-tests-will-probably-resume-after-olympics-n840116</p>
GIST	<p>North Korea's diplomatic olive branches ahead of the Winter Olympics shouldn't be mistaken for the end of Kim Jong Un's missile and nuclear tests, according to a former U.S. ambassador and a top analyst.</p> <p>PyeongChang 2018 will be the first Olympic Games to feature athletes from the South and North on a unified team — even though the neighbors are technically still at war.</p> <p>North Korean leader Kim is sending a 550-member delegation, including athletes and cheerleaders, following rare face-to-face talks between the rivals.</p> <p>"There'll be a positive feeling that ... we've somehow turned the corner and are heading to a solution," said Chris Hill, the former ambassador to South Korea, referring to the recent Olympic cooperation.</p> <p>But, he added, "I don't think by any means North Korea is prepared to denuclearize at this point."</p> <p>North Korea ramped up its missile and nuclear program last year, testing its first three intercontinental ballistic missiles and most powerful nuclear weapon to date.</p> <p>This was met with international sanctions as well as a flurry of insults between President Donald Trump and North Korean state media.</p> <p>The Olympics appear to have acted as a peg on which to hang a certain degree of cooperation between the two Koreas that has not been seen in years.</p> <p>As well as the face-to-face meetings and joint participation in the games, the South also agreed to pause the joint military exercises it holds each year with the U.S.</p> <p>"I think what North Korea is trying to achieve with this opening of dialogue with the South is as if to say, 'Look we have nuclear weapons, we're not going to get rid of nuclear weapons, but we are prepared to be very good neighbor,'" Hill said. "It's an effort to present a sense of normalcy to their country, the fact that they are somehow, in their view, a member of the international community in good standing."</p> <p>However, Hill warned there was a danger that the North was trying to divide the U.S. from its South Korean ally by taking a hard line toward Washington while cozying up to Seoul.</p> <p>They may want to "expose some difference between the outlook between the U.S. and South Korea," he said.</p> <p>This echoes concerns by officials in the Trump administration. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and national security adviser H.R. McMaster have both warned that North Korea must not be allowed "to drive a wedge" between the allies.</p>

Hill said this new-found diplomacy could continue after the games, but any hope that it might lead to the North making any concessions over its weapons program appeared faint at best.

"I don't think we've seen the last missile launch from North Korea," he said. "I think some of the goodwill of these Olympics will certainly dissipate over the coming months."

This view is held by many experts including Jeffrey Lewis, a nuclear policy expert at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, California.

He told NBC News that he had "no doubt whatsoever" Kim's regime would resume testing in the near future.

"I think things will get better for the Olympics — or at least I'm hopeful that they will," he said, but added, "I think there is exactly no chance the North Koreans will abandon their nuclear weapons."

Like the former diplomat, Lewis pointed out that North Korea's tests aren't designed merely to make a political statement, but are rather necessary practical stepping stones on its route to building a viable nuclear weapon capable of hitting the U.S.

"They've only tested their biggest missile once," he said. "And I expect that they will test it many more times before they have the kind of confidence in it that they want."

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HEADLINE	01/24 Puerto Rico awaits foreclosure wave
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/puerto-rico-awaits-foreclosure-wave-moratoriums-expire-52569496?
GIST	<p>Aylsa Torres sighed in relief when she received a letter from her bank two weeks after Hurricane Maria hit. She was among the hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans awarded a three-month moratorium on their mortgage payments as the U.S. territory reeled from the storm's destruction.</p> <p>Believing she was temporarily freed from those financial obligations, the 46-year-old government worker drained her savings to pay for a \$750 generator and \$786 worth of repairs for storm damage. But when Torres visited her bank in December, she says, she was shocked to hear that she was behind on payments and that officials threatened to foreclose on her apartment and ruin her credit rating.</p> <p>Confusion and panic is spreading across this U.S. territory as the majority of moratorium agreements expire this month, with many people discovering they never qualified for the moratorium in the first place or struggling to obtain extensions because they cannot pay what is owed to the banks.</p> <p>"It's incredibly frustrating," Torres said. "You feel like everyone is closing a door in your face. No one has a genuine interest in helping you."</p> <p>Legal experts say it is a scene that will repeat itself in the coming weeks and months on an island that already was seeing a sharp rise in foreclosures before the hurricane as a result of an 11-year-old recession that has forced government austerity measures.</p> <p>Even worse, experts say, many Puerto Ricans stopped making payments on their mortgages after the Sept. 20 storm because they thought the moratorium was automatic, when it was not. The storm knocked out power across the island, the largest blackout in U.S. history, preventing many from learning that they had to contact their bank to request a moratorium, said Ariadna Godreau, a professor and human rights lawyer.</p> <p>"The big concern now is that mortgage foreclosures are going to spike," she said. "We're going to see more homeless people, more homes foreclosed."</p>

Over almost a decade, the number of repossessed homes in Puerto Rico grew from more than 2,300 in 2008 to above 5,400 in 2016 and an estimated 6,200 or more last year.

After the storm, foreclosures were temporarily suspended, and banks in the U.S. territory offered a moratorium on mortgages for those who qualified, as did the federal government. Moratoriums offered by the U.S. government have been extended to March, but banks have ended theirs.

Banco Popular, which is Puerto Rico's largest bank, said more than 20,500 clients received moratoriums that expired in December and January. Bank executives say they are working with their clients, but stress that they still need to collect what is owed.

"Those clients that truly are not responding to the bank's letters are those who really will be at risk of facing a foreclosure," said Jose Teruel, first vice president of the consumer credit services division at Banco Popular.

Other large Puerto Rico banks declined to provide specific numbers. Oriental said only that 69 percent of its home loans were under moratorium by the end of November, while First Bank said about half of its clients were given moratoriums. Santander said 123,000 of its accounts, including both mortgages and personal and commercial loans, received moratoriums expiring in December and January.

"The three-month moratorium might have seemed generous at first, but in reality, it's not," said Maria Jimenez, director of the legal services clinic at the University of Puerto Rico. "There are still people without power, so the ability to generate revenue is not there."

More than 30,000 jobs were lost after Hurricane Maria, and some 30 percent of small- and medium-size businesses remain closed more than four months after the storm, according to the island's Treasury Department. Meanwhile, more than 30 percent of power customers remain in the dark and many struggle to pay rising utility bills.

Puerto Rico's Office of the Commissioner of Financial Institutions said it is collecting more information to better understand the situation. It recently extended a deadline for all banks on the island to submit data, including exactly how many moratoriums were awarded.

It is unclear how banks will handle the mortgages, said Rafael Rodriguez, who oversees a legal aid project involving foreclosures for the nonprofit Legal Services of Puerto Rico. "The expectation we have is that once the moratoriums expire, the massive wave of foreclosures on the island will continue," he said.

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HEADLINE	01/23 'Ring of fire' explodes in activity
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/US/scientists-rash-earthquakes-volcanic-eruptions-ring-fire-connected/story?id=52548632&cid=clicksource_81_2_hero_headlines_bsq_hed
GIST	<p>Volcanic eruptions in Japan, the Philippines and Bali. Massive earthquakes in Alaska and Indonesia.</p> <p>The rash of natural disasters over the past two days have one common denominator: they all occurred along the so-called Ring of Fire, a sprawling horseshoe-shape geological disaster zone.</p> <p>At least five different events occurred on the Ring of Fire on Monday and Tuesday, including a magnitude 7.9 earthquake that rattled the town of Kodiak, Alaska, and the eruption of Mount Kusatsu-Shirane near a ski resort northwest of Tokyo.</p> <p>While the series of cataclysmic activity has come in rapid succession, scientists say most of them occurred thousands of miles apart and there is nothing to suggest they are connected.</p> <p>"It's very unlikely that these things are related," William Yeck, a research geophysicist for the US</p>

	<p>Geological Survey, told ABC News on Tuesday.</p> <p>Yeck said the Ring of Fire, which encompasses 452 volcanoes and where more than 80 percent of world's largest earthquakes occurred, is constantly active.</p> <p>"This amount of activity isn't unusual," Yeck said.</p> <p>The Ring of Fire stretches 25,000 miles. It goes from New Zealand up through Indonesia, the Philippines and Japan, and then across the Aleutian Islands and down the coasts of Alaska, Canada, the West Coast of the United States and all the way down to the tip of South America.</p> <p>"It's largely the Pacific plate that makes up the majority of it," Yeck said.</p> <p>But the ring also includes the Philippine Sea plate, Juan de Fuca and Cocos plates, and the Nazca Plate.</p> <p>The tectonic plates fit together like a puzzle, but are constantly moving and colliding with each other, thus producing numerous earthquakes.</p> <p>In addition to the volcanic eruption in Japan and the earthquake in Alaska, a magnitude 6.1 earthquake occurred off the southern coast of Java, Indonesia's mainland, on Tuesday. Also Tuesday, Mount Agung in Bali and Mount Mayon in the Philippines blew their tops, spewing red-hot lava and causing the evacuations of thousands of people.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Ranking best countries: US falls to 8th
SOURCE	https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2018/01/23/US-falls-to-8th-in-2018-ranking-of-Best-Countries/2971516732554/?utm_source=fp&utm_campaign=ts_tn_int&utm_medium=4
GIST	<p>Jan. 23 (UPI) -- The United States dropped one spot to eighth place in this year's world ranking of countries by U.S. News and World Report.</p> <p>Asst. Managing Editor Kevin Drew said the U.S. changes are "fueled by the world's perceptions of the country becoming less progressive and trustworthy, more politically unstable and a president who after just a year in office is far more unpopular than any other head of state or company CEO."</p> <p>President Donald Trump took office one year ago, pledging to "Make America Great Again."</p> <p>Switzerland retained the No. 1 spot on the Best Countries 2018 list, buoyed by its "reputation for citizenship and being open for business," Drew said. Canada also stays at No. 2, boosted by the "best quality of life, driven by high ratings for education, health care and public safety."</p> <p>Germany took the No. 3 spot from Britain, which fell to fourth -- followed by Japan, Sweden, Australia, the United States, France and the Netherlands.</p> <p>The poll surveyed global citizens from four regions on perceptions of 80 countries involving 75 metrics.</p> <p>The United States is still viewed as the most powerful nation, but it declined the most in the perceptions of respondents for countries with open travel policies -- likely a backlash of Trump's travel ban orders.</p> <p>In the survey, the top issues are terrorism, income inequality and climate change.</p> <p>Last year, the United States also dropped one position from sixth to seventh in the 2017 global poll.</p> <p>The survey was conducted in partnership with global marketing communications company Y&R's brand strategy firm, BAV Group, and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.</p>

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HEADLINE	01/23 Cape Town 'day zero' April 12th
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/drought-stricken-cape-town-south-africa-moves-day/story?id=52553321
GIST	<p>The water supplies of one of the world's top tourist destinations, South Africa's Cape Town, have dwindled even further than predicted, prompting authorities to adjust their estimate of when taps could run dry.</p> <p>City officials have moved up "day zero" -- when taps are expected to run dry -- by nine days, to April 12.</p> <p>A 1.4-percent drop in dam levels prompted the change a week after the city had said April 22 would likely be Cape Town's "day zero," officials said Monday.</p> <p>The city is now estimated to have enough water for less than 80 days.</p> <p>The premier of South Africa's Western Cape province, Helen Zille, wrote to South Africa President Jacob Zuma calling for the declaration of a national disaster, saying the drought has escalated from a threat to an imminent crisis.</p> <p>After three consecutive years of drought, the city's dams, sourced by rainfall, were sitting at just over 27 percent, the city said.</p> <p>The debilitating water shortage has forced city government to implement a controversial online water consumption map, which allows residents to check up on their neighbors' water habits based on households' municipal bills.</p> <p>With an estimated 3.74 million people in 2016, Cape Town is the second-most populous city in South Africa behind Johannesburg. It is the provincial capital of the Western Cape.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Rohingya fear repatriation to Myanmar
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2018/01/23/asia/bangladesh-rohingya-repatriation-fears-intl/index.html
GIST	<p>Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh (CNN)Traveling at speed in a ramshackle truck, a group of 44 Rohingya refugees make the last stage of their harrowing 10-day journey into Bangladesh after fleeing from Myanmar.</p> <p>Dazed and exhausted, they stumble out of the vehicle when they arrive at Balukhali refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, many of them cradling young children. They rest at the side of the road, and begin to reflect on the horrors they say they escaped.</p> <p>"My son was killed by the Myanmar army, and still I stayed there," 42-year-old Rohingya refugee Mohammed Salim tells CNN. "But then they destroyed my house, so there was no place for me to stay."</p> <p>The escape of Salim and his neighbors, who arrived in Bangladesh last Saturday some five months after the initial crackdown by Myanmar's military that triggered the exodus, underscores the fact that the crisis in Myanmar's Rakhine State is far from over and the repatriation process, which had been slated to begin this week, may be dangerously premature.</p> <p>"Girls were unable to sleep there at night, girls would stay awake in the fear of the military," another newly arrived refugee, 40 year old Assia Khatun says. "They used to harm us, harass us, hurt us ... there were tears and sorrow everywhere."</p> <p>Since, August 25, 2017, an estimated 688,000 Rohingya have arrived in Bangladesh -- amid widespread</p>

reports of military-backed mass rape, murder and the burning down of entire villages. The UN and the US have labeled the violence against the mainly Muslim Rohingya as "ethnic cleansing."

Myanmar denies these charges, saying its military has only targeted suspected terrorists that killed 12 security officials in late August, although in January it admitted involvement in the killing of 10 Rohingya buried in a mass grave.

Now, the refugees who escaped this persecution are being told to go back to a place where they say their lives are under threat, as part of an agreement made between the governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh two months ago.

It's not clear exactly when the first Rohingya refugees will return across the border, but the prospect is raising fears in the sprawling Cox's Bazar camps, especially among the newest arrivals whose memories of Myanmar's persecution are still raw.

"If they try to send us back there now, we will not go," 24-year-old Rohingya refugee Halima Khatun says, as she held her young baby in her arms. "If the government of Bangladesh threatens to kill us by cutting our throats, we will not go back even then."

Bangladesh officials say the vetting process and the building of temporary shelters is already underway, but there's still no timeline for the physical repatriation of the refugees.

Myanmar's Ministry of Information said last week the repatriation process was scheduled to begin Tuesday. It said Bangladesh would provide lists of returnees who have completed verification forms.

Mohammed Abul Kalam, the Bangladesh's Relief and Refugee Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) denied reports this week that the process had been delayed but says more work needed to be done to allay concerns among the Rohingya refugees. He believes that the refugees will want to return once their fears abate.

"(Once they know) we have bargained with the Myanmar side about their safety, their security, and their livelihoods, they will certainly be inspired and hopeful to get back I think," he said.

Eventually, he says 1,500 people a week would be repatriated but it's not clear how many people would be taken back in total. The whole process could take two years.

The Rohingya Muslim ethnic minority has long faced persecution in Buddhist-majority Myanmar, which describes them as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, despite many of them tracing their roots back hundreds of years.

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Cyber Awareness

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HEADLINE	01/23 Research: hackers hit cryptocurrency
SOURCE	https://www.newsmax.com/thewire/hackers-cryptocurrency-ico-stolen/2018/01/23/id/838882/
GIST	<p>Hackers are taking a bite out of cryptocurrency projects, with more than 10 percent of funds raised through "initial coin offerings" lost or stolen in hacker attacks, according to new research by Ernst & Young.</p> <p>The professional services firm analyzed more than 372 ICOs, in which new digital currencies are distributed to buyers, and found that roughly \$400 million of the total \$3.7 billion funds raised to date had been stolen, according to research published on Monday.</p> <p>Phishing was the most widely used hacking technique for ICOs, with hackers stealing up to \$1.5 million in ICO proceeds per month, according to the report.</p>

The research also noted that the volume of ICOs has been slowing since late 2017. Less than 25 percent of ICOs reached their target in November, compared with 90 percent in June.

The study comes amid a cryptocurrency investing craze, with young companies raising hundreds of millions of dollars online to fund their projects, with often little more than a handful of employees and a business plan outlined in a so-called "white paper."

The challenges faced by more recent ICOs in reaching their targets are partly attributable to the lower quality of projects, as well as issues that have emerged around earlier projects, said Paul Brody, global innovation leader for blockchain technology at Ernst & Young (EY).

"The volume just exploded, people raised their fundraising goals and the quality just dropped," Brody said in an interview.

"We were shocked by the quality of some of the white papers, we see clear coding errors and we see conflicts of interest between the companies issuing tokens and the community of token holders."

In ICOs companies typically raise money to build new technology platforms or to fund businesses that use cryptocurrencies, also called tokens, and blockchain, the software that underpins them. Yet for many of these projects the need for blockchain and cryptocurrencies is often unjustified, according to EY.

It also noted valuations of ICO tokens are often driven by "fear of missing out," or "FOMO," and have no connection to market fundamentals such as project development. EY said "FOMO" has led investors to pour money into ICOs at record speeds, with the 10 shortest lasting ICOs attracting \$300,000 per second on average.

The study also found several instances in which the underlying software code of a project contained hidden investment terms that had not been disclosed, or contradicted previous disclosures. For example, a whitepaper might state that there will be no further issuance of a cryptocurrency, while the code might leave that option open.

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HEADLINE 01/23 Report: US cybercrime hits \$19.4B

SOURCE <https://sg.news.yahoo.com/consumers-lost-19-4-billion-cybercriminals-2017-115748003.html>

GIST Millennials may be the most connected generation yet, but that doesn't mean they're the smartest when it comes to keeping their data safe. According to a new report by cybersecurity firm Symantec (SYMC), makers of Norton antivirus software, 69% of those from the social-media generation fell victim to a cybercrime in 2017 in the U.S. alone.

Millennials were not the only ones duped by criminals. Everyone from Baby Boomers to Gen X'ers were impacted by cybercrime last year. All told, Symantec's 2017 Norton Cyber Security Insights Report indicates that more than one half of the adult internet population in the U.S., or roughly 143 million people, were hit by some form of malware, virus, spyware or phishing scam in the past year.

Globally, that number jumps to a whopping 978 million internet users who were hit by tech savvy criminals looking to score an easy buck. And score they did. Symantec says U.S. consumers lost \$19.4 billion and about 20 hours of time dealing with the impact of cybercrime. That amount jumps to \$172 billion when you take the rest of the world into account.

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HEADLINE 01/23 Report: DDoS bigger, more complex

SOURCE	https://www.computing.co.uk/ctg/news/3025045/ddos-attacks-becoming-bigger-and-more-complex-warns-report
GIST	<p>Distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks are rising in frequency and becoming more complex, according to a freshly published report.</p> <p>Network performance management specialist Netscout has released its latest Annual Arbor Worldwide Infrastructure Security Report (WISR), offering an insight into the latest threats affecting cloud and enterprise organisations.</p> <p>The report covers an array of areas, including DDoS attacks, SDN/NFV and IPv6 adoption, and organisational issues such as incident response training.</p> <p>Last year, there was a "dramatic spike" in the frequency and complexity of DDoS attacks, according to the report, with an estimated 7.5 million attacks of varying severity in 2017 affecting almost 60 per cent of enterprises.</p> <p>While there are plenty of techniques to fend off these threats, DDoS tactics are becoming more sophisticated, said the report.</p> <p>An estimated 59 per cent of service providers and 48 per cent of enterprises have experienced a multi-vendor attack in the last year, an increase of 20 per cent compared to 2016.</p> <p>The report claimed that these attacks have become "more impactful than ever", affecting companies both operationally and financially, as well as in terms of reputation.</p> <p>However, the report suggested that the number one target of DDoS attacks were online gaming companies - indicating, perhaps, that it's the resort of easily disgruntled teenagers. However, extortion also figured highly as a motivating factor behind DDoS attacks, the report claims.</p> <p>Revenue losses caused by DDoS attacks have almost doubled since 2016. Around 56 per cent of businesses reported losses of between \$10,000 and \$100,000.</p> <p>And, not surprisingly, there's an increased demand for security services, according to Netscout, which labour markets are struggling to satisfy. Some 38 per cent of enterprises are using third-party systems to help improve their security.</p> <p>On top of that, 50 per cent of respondents claim to have carried out defensive drills to test their own responses to potential cyber attacks.</p> <p>But these responses may be hampered by a major cyber security skill shortage. The report indicated that 54 per cent of enterprises and 48 per cent of service providers are struggling to hire the right security professionals.</p> <p>Darren Anstee, chief technology officer of Netscout Arbor, claimed that cyber criminals are becoming more resourceful when it comes to targeting enterprises.</p> <p>"Attackers focused on complexity this year, leveraging weaponisation of IoT devices while shifting away from reliance on massive attack volume to achieve their goals," he said.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Ontario transit agency blames NKorea
SOURCE	http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/north-korean-cyber-attack-metrolinx-1.4500918
GIST	An Ontario transit agency says it was in the crosshairs of a North Korean cyberattack earlier this month.

	<p>The attack was a virus, routed through Russia, that infected computers at Metrolinx, according to a source at the agency who spoke on condition of anonymity.</p> <p>Spokesperson Anne Marie Aikins confirmed to CBC Toronto that the attack took place, but said it did not result in any breach in privacy and did not compromise any safety systems.</p> <p>Aikins could not provide further details about the attack, citing "security reasons."</p> <p>Metrolinx is an arm's-length organization in charge of transportation for the Toronto and Hamilton area.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Experts question FBI 'lost messages'
SOURCE	https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2018/jan/23/security-experts-question-fbis-data-storage-proced/
GIST	<p>The FBI may have ignored its own data storage procedures as it lost five months of text messages between two anti-Trump FBI employees, security analysts said.</p> <p>Texts that have been made public, which show the two employees and reported lovers talking about their antipathy toward the president and efforts to impeach him, have become a major embarrassment for an FBI already reeling from accusations of bias and bungling.</p> <p>But the Justice Department said it lost five months of texts from FBI agent Peter Strzok during a key period when he and FBI lawyer Lisa Page were venting about Mr. Trump and investigations surrounding the 2016 presidential election.</p> <p>Mr. Trump on Tuesday called the missing messages "one of the biggest stories in a long time," and the White House said reporters should treat the lost texts with the "same obsession" they have approached suspicions of collusion between Russia and the presidential campaign.</p> <p>The FBI couple exchanged more than 50,000 texts from July 1, 2015, to July 28, 2017.</p> <p>The FBI was expected to provide Congress with a new batch of texts that the couple exchanged from Dec. 14, 2016, to May 17, 2017. But the agency told lawmakers over the weekend that "misconfiguration issues" caused a loss of the texts.</p> <p>"I can't say that I ever saw anything like this during my time with the FBI," said Don Vilfer, a former agent who heads the computer forensics division at Vand Group LLC. "It's an anomaly that something like this would happen."</p> <p>While politicians debate whether to release the content of the text messages, technology analysts question how five months of emails could have disappeared. Some said it is likely the bureau's procedures were not followed, but further investigation would be needed to determine if that was intentional or accidental.</p> <p>"This is unusual and contrary to FBI policy, which requires that all records be preserved unless they are specifically cleared for disposal," said Steve Aftergood of the Federation for American Scientists. "Is it the sign of something nefarious? Maybe. But it could also be a sign that the two agents were allegedly having an affair and took great steps to delete their texts."</p> <p>The FBI did not respond to requests for comment.</p> <p>On Monday, Attorney General Jeff Sessions vowed to find the missing texts.</p> <p>"We will leave no stone unturned to confirm with certainty why these text messages are not now available to be produced and will use every technology available to determine whether the missing messages are</p>

	recoverable from another source,” Mr. Sessions said. “If we are successful, we will update the congressional committees immediately.”
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HEADLINE	01/23 UK's top law firms at risk
SOURCE	https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/uks-top-law-firms-at-risk-1m/
GIST	<p>The UK's top law firms are at serious risk of unauthorized network intrusions after new research revealed over one million breached credentials on the dark web.</p> <p>RepKnight studied 620 domains belonging to 500 of the UK's law firms and found 1.16 million corporate email addresses on various sites which collect previously stolen or leaked credentials.</p> <p>What's more, more than half of these had been posted in the past six months, and 80% had an associated password – often available in clear text or hashed values which can be easily cracked, the vendor claimed.</p> <p>“This puts those staff – and the law firm's network – at significant risk from ‘credential stuffing’ attacks, where bots are used to repeatedly try the same username and password on multiple sites,” the report continued. “Perhaps more serious are ‘spear phishing’ attacks or identity fraud, where those credentials are used as part of a targeted cyber-attack on that individual.”</p> <p>The vast majority of these credentials were taken from third-party breaches such as the one at LinkedIn, where law firm employees had signed up with their work credentials.</p> <p>However, their appearance on dark web sites with associated passwords plunges their employers into a potentially alarming situation, if those credentials are used to access the corporate network, craft spear-phishing emails loaded with malware, or even attempt CEO fraud.</p> <p>Any leaks of highly sensitive client or employee data could result in heavy fines under the GDPR.</p> <p>The legal sector is coming under increasing scrutiny from cyber-criminals looking to tap the wealth of lucrative information such firms hold.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Cybercrime cost 17M UK consumers \$6B
SOURCE	https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/the-6-billion-crime-17m-uk/
GIST	<p>Cybercrime cost 17 million UK consumers an estimated £4.6bn (\$6bn) last year, according to Symantec.</p> <p>The vendor polled over 21,000 adults across 21 markets, including 1000 in the UK, to compile its 2017 Norton Cyber Security Insights Report.</p> <p>Globally, cyber-criminals stole £130bn (\$172bn) from 978 million consumers in those countries.</p> <p>The UK's mature online economy contributed a hefty chunk of the £20.7bn taken from 98.2 million European consumers during the period. Even more telling, each victim of cybercrime is said to have lost nearly two working days (14.8 hrs) dealing with the aftermath of the incident.</p> <p>Just one in 12 UK consumers suffered a ransomware file lock-down, with over a fifth (22%) failing to regain access to their data despite paying the ransom.</p> <p>The 44% of total British netizens that claimed never to back-up could be playing a risky game.</p> <p>“Handing the hackers money simply continues to fund their efforts with no guarantee that you'll</p>

personally be able to regain access to your digital life,” warned Nick Shaw, general manager of Norton EMEA. “In the case of ransomware, crime pays, and we can all take some simple steps to thwart their efforts.”

Tellingly, cybercrime victims were more likely to use the same online password across all their accounts: 20% versus 12% of non-victims.

Cybercrime is becoming more frequent: 60% of those who have suffered an attack in the past were hit in the past year, including 37% who handed over info after being phished, 40% who had their home Wi-Fi cracked, a third who were conned into fraudulent purchases and more than a quarter who fell for tech support scams.

Yet 28% of UK victims think they’re able to protect their data from future attacks and 26% think they’re at low risk of being hit again, according to the report.

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HEADLINE	01/23 Turkish defense contractors targeted
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SOURCE	https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/espionage-campaign-turkish/
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GIST	<p>An unknown actor purporting to be from the tax collection arm of the Turkish government has been carrying out spear-phishing campaigns against Turkish defense contractors.</p> <p>According to RiskIQ, the perpetrators have been targeting multiple people inside a given organization since November 2017 with weaponized documents that download a remote access Trojan (RAT) named Remcos. Remcos can log keystrokes, take screenshots, record audio and video from a webcam or microphone, install and uninstall programs, and manage files. Interestingly, it also has SOCKS5 proxy capabilities: An operator can turn the victims of the crime into proxies for its own network, hiding the real C2 server.</p> <p>“Regions of the world in geopolitical turmoil, like Turkey, are prime targets for cyber-espionage campaigns,” said RiskIQ researcher Yonathan Klijsma in a blog. “The group used tactics that have become extremely useful for cyber-spies – spear-phishing emails that social engineer the victim to download an attached or embedded file and then enable macros.”</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 SamSam attackers made \$325K in month
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SOURCE	http://www.securityweek.com/samsam-operators-make-325000-4-weeks
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GIST	<p>Numerous SamSam attacks over the past month or so have paid off to the ransomware’s operators, as they made over \$325,000 in a short period of time, security researchers with Cisco Talos say.</p> <p>Starting last month, the malware began targeting organizations across multiple industries including government, healthcare and ICS in a series of attacks that appear to be rather opportunistic in nature. The impact, however, was wider, especially in the healthcare sector, where patients were affected too, not just the hit organizations.</p> <p>On January 11, the ransomware hit Hancock Health, headquartered in Greenfield, Indiana, a hospital that ended up paying \$55,000 to regain access to its files. Adams Memorial Hospital in Decatur, Indiana, and Allscripts, a major electronic health record (EHR) company headquartered in Chicago, IL (which confirmed to SecurityWeek that roughly 1,500 clients were impacted), were also hit by SamSam.</p> <p>Other organizations were impacted as well, yet the security researchers still haven’t figured out what infection vector the attackers used. Previously, SamSam operators have been compromising a machine within the network and then moving laterally to inject code and execute the ransomware.</p>
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	<p>In a report released in March last year, Javelin Networks explained that SamSam’s operators have been using stolen domain credentials to gain access to a host, then leveraging Active Directory for reconnaissance purposes, and later moving laterally through the network.</p> <p>In 2016, SamSam was observed targeting vulnerable JBoss hosts, and Cisco believes that compromised RDP/VNC servers might have been used in the recent wave of attacks, allowing SamSam operators to obtain an initial foothold.</p> <p>As part of the new attacks, string obfuscation and improved anti-analysis techniques were employed. The attackers used a loader to decrypt and execute an encrypted ransomware payload, a mechanism they have been employing since at least October 2017.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/24 Bell Canada hit by data breach
SOURCE	http://www.securityweek.com/bell-canada-hit-data-breach
GIST	<p>Bell Canada has started informing customers that their personal data has been compromised in a breach that reportedly affects up to 100,000 individuals.</p> <p>Bell told customers that their names and email addresses were “illegally accessed,” but Canadian news reports said phone numbers, usernames and account numbers may have also been obtained by hackers. The telecoms company, however, says there is no evidence that credit card or banking information has been compromised.</p> <p>In response to the incident, Bell has implemented additional authentication and identification requirements for accessing accounts. The company has also advised users to frequently change their password and security questions, and regularly review their financial and online accounts for unauthorized activity.</p> <p>This is the second time Bell Canada has informed customers of a data breach. In May last year, the company admitted that approximately 1.9 million active email addresses and roughly 1,700 names and active phone numbers were accessed by a hacker. It is unclear if the two incidents are related.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Fake ‘Fire and Fury’ PDF w/malware
SOURCE	https://www.scmagazine.com/fake-fire-and-fury-pdfs-laced-with-malware/article/738764/
GIST	<p>While Michael Wolff’s controversial tell-all book about the Trump administration is laced with what some describe as damaging bombshells, pirated PDF versions of “Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House” apparently come tinged with their own element of malice – malware likely intended to steal readers’ personal information.</p> <p>Antivirus software can detect the malware embedded in the spoof PDFs, which are only 238 pages long rather than 328 pages like the original, according to a report in the Telegraph.</p> <p>The bad actors behind the fraudulent manuscripts have not yet been identified, nor has their purpose, but the report points out that the type of malware discovered by Kaspersky Lab Security Researcher Michael Molsner is typically used to install keyloggers then steal personal login information to access bank and email accounts.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Infants’ SSN for sale on dark web
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SOURCE	https://www.scmagazine.com/infants-social-security-numbers-sold-on-dark-web-in-time-for-tax-season/article/738958/
GIST	<p>Apparently, you're never too young to be on the dark web -- or at least for your data to be hawked there. The personal identifiable information (PII) of infants, including Social Security numbers, were recently found advertised for sale on the dark web under the sales pitch "get em befor tax seson [sic]."</p> <p>In addition to the SSNs, cybercriminals were selling dates of birth and mother's maiden names for \$300 worth of Bitcoin for each baby data set, just before tax season when identity theft is highest, according to CNN.</p> <p>The information is particularly valuable as criminals as the information's provides access to a clean credit history allowing them to take out mortgages, apply for credit cards or receive government benefits all of which could go undetected for many years until the victim is old enough to open their own credit account.</p> <p>For this reason, the stolen information is particularly valuable as it can allow a thief's actions to go undetected for an extended amount of time.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Fla. releases 1,000 Kansas voters info
SOURCE	https://www.scmagazine.com/florida-makes-info-on-1k-kansas-voters-public-lawmakers-ask-dhs-to-clarify-role-regarding-election-integrity-commission/article/738989/
GIST	<p>Florida released partial social security numbers for close to 1,000 Kansas voters after receiving data from Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach as part of the Crosscheck program that identifies double voter registration.</p> <p>"It is absolutely essential," Kobach said of the program after the calling the exposed data unfortunate, according to a report by The Kansas City Star. "The Crosscheck provides the first piece of evidence that a person may have voted twice."</p> <p>Kobach, who most recently co-chaired, along with Vice President Mike Pence, the now-defunct President's Commission on Election Integrity, said "if the Crosscheck program were to go away, then we would be unable to catch virtually all of the double voters," of which, he claimed, "there are thousands" nationwide.</p> <p>The Kansas AG, who is running for governor, was tapped by President Trump last year to investigate voter fraud after he lost the popular vote in the presidential election by nearly three million votes to his rival, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.</p> <p>The commission was disbanded in early January after it faced resistance from states fearing privacy concerns and voter suppression as well as a wide array of lawsuits. Alarmed by the breadth of voter data requested by the commission, many states had resisted its overtures, leading the White House to concede it was fighting an uphill battle.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Fla. charges 2 w/cyberstalking in suicide
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/us/2018/01/23/2-12-year-olds-charged-with-cyberstalking-in-girls-suicide.html
GIST	<p>PANAMA CITY BEACH, Fla. – Two 12-year-olds in Florida have been charged with cyberstalking in connection with the death of a middle school student who killed herself two weeks ago.</p> <p>Panama City Beach officials said in a news release that the circumstances around the death of 12-year-old Gabriella Green on Jan. 10 led to the arrests of the two Surfside Middle School students.</p>

	<p>The news release said investigators were made aware of the potential cyberbullying against the girl, which led them to examine several cellphones and social media accounts. They interviewed two suspects who confessed to cyberbullying.</p> <p>Gabriella's mother, Tanya Green, told the News Herald the arrests "were gratifying" but added she puts the blame on parents and the school system.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Ex-congressional staffers plead guilty
SOURCE	https://www.newsmax.com/newsfront/cyberstalking-nude-photos-congress-virgin-islands/2018/01/23/id/839008/
GIST	<p>Two former staff members pleaded guilty Tuesday to charges related to the circulation of nude images and a video of an elected representative to Congress and her husband, CNN reports.</p> <p>Juan McCullum, 36, took private nude images from Virgin Islands Delegate Stacey Plaskett's cell phone and distributed them via email and posted them to a phony Facebook account. He pleaded guilty to two federal cyber-related charges and two offenses.</p> <p>Dorene Browne-Louis, 45, another Plaskett staffer, pleaded guilty to one federal cyber charge and conspiracy to disclose sexual images.</p> <p>"My family and I are thankful for the efforts of the United States Capitol Police and the United States Attorney's Office in holding accountable the individuals responsible for the violation of privacy perpetuated against my family and me," Plaskett said in a statement Tuesday.</p> <p>"We have put this incident behind us and are grateful for those who worked to bring closure to this matter," she added.</p>
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Terror Conditions

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HEADLINE	01/23 ISIS executioner on global terror list
SOURCE	http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/01/23/us-lists-siddhartha-dhar-global-terrorist-identifies-jihadi/
GIST	<p>US officials have put a British jihadist on a global terrorist list and identified him as the replacement for Jihadi John as Islamic State group's executioner.</p> <p>Siddhartha Dhar was designated a global terrorist by the US State Department alongside a Belgian-Moroccan also fighting for the militants in the Middle East.</p> <p>Dhar, a former bouncy castle salesman also known as Abu Rumasayah, was able to escape the authorities and take his family to Syria despite being on bail for terrorism offences.</p> <p>After arriving in the self-declared caliphate of Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (Isil) he was then believed to have appeared as a masked figure presenting a propaganda video which he said showed "British spies" being executed.</p> <p>In the gruesome ten and a half minute clip, the men, who are wearing orange jump suits, each confess to passing on information about Isil and its operatives.</p>

The US Government said the declaration of Dhar and Abdelatif Gaini as specially designated global terrorists would seek to deny them “the resources they need to plan and carry out further terrorist attacks”.

A statement said Dhar, who has been nicknamed ‘Jihadi Sid’ was a leading member of the now-defunct terrorist organization Al-Muhajiroun, alongside Anjem Choudary.

“He is considered to have replaced ISIS executioner Mohammad Emwazi, also known as Jihadi John.

“Dhar is believed to be the masked leader who appeared in a January 2016 ISIS video of the execution of several prisoners ISIS accused of spying for the UK.”

American officials said the designation “notifies the US public and the international community that Dhar and Gaini have committed, or pose a significant risk of committing acts of terrorism.

“Terrorism designations expose and isolate organizations and individuals, and deny them access to the US financial system.”

Dhar was arrested in September 2014 alongside Choudary on suspicion of belonging to the banned group Al-Muhajiroun.

But to the embarrassment of the authorities, just hours after being granted police bail, Dhar caught a bus to Paris with his family and then travelled on to Syria where he joined Isil.

He then taunted the British authorities by boasting of his new life in the Caliphate and posted pictures on Twitter, showing him holding an AK-47 assault rifle in one arm and his baby son on the other.

Dhar was raised a Hindu, but converted to Islam to marry his Muslim wife Aisha.

Former neighbours in Walthamstow, east London, have claimed Dhar's wife was more devout than him and suggested she may have put him on the path to extremism.

In the months leading up to his arrest Dhar was accused of burning poppies and calling for the imposition of Sharia law in Britain.

He was a key member of al-Muhajiroun and offshoot groups such as the Shariah Project, masterminding 'roadshows' in London that aimed to recruit troubled youngsters to Islam.

Choudary was later jailed for five years and six months at the Old Bailey for drumming up support for Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

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HEADLINE	01/23 ISIS disabled fighters propaganda videos
SOURCE	http://www.newsweek.com/isis-uses-blind-fighter-promote-jihad-and-militant-insurrections-788709
GIST	<p>In a twisted attempt at inclusivity, the Islamic State group also known as ISIS is featuring disabled fighters in its propaganda videos and encouraging people with disabilities to wage war against the infidels.</p> <p>One of the group’s most recent videos, released Saturday, features a blind Kazakh fighter in Syria calling for the overthrow of the government of Kazakhstan. A little over a month ago, another video released by the Islamic State showed an ISIS fighter with one leg telling future jihadists that a disability is “no excuse” for not fighting.</p> <p>The most recent video was released after President Donald Trump met with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev at the White House on January 16 to discuss a strategic partnership between the two countries.</p>

	<p>The video, released by the SITE Intelligence Group, included five Kazakhs, including a scholar, a sniper, and the blind fighter. The men argued that Nazarbayev’s government should not be permitted to remove the Islamic identity of its people and govern with laws imported from Russia.</p> <p>“My brothers and sisters, O brothers in faith, what is wrong with you? Where are you? Didn’t we dream of the Caliphate for years? And here it is, the Caliphate granted to us by Allah,” said the blind fighter, who identified himself only as Abu Bakr al-Kazakhi.</p> <p>“Today the world is divided onto one of two places: a land of faith and a land of disbelief. All the disbelieving faiths have amassed against the Caliphate, and at the same time you are procrastinating and using every lame excuse,” he continued.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/24 US pulled multiple ways in Syria
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/5e48b0897c6f46de8064d347362c7545/US-pulled-multiple-ways-in-Syria-as-Islamic-State-recedes
GIST	<p>WASHINGTON (AP) — For the last few years, the United States could neatly sum its objective in Syria in a single, uncontroversial bullet point: fighting the Islamic State group. Now that the extremists have been squeezed from all but the last bits of their former territory, the Trump administration is struggling to define the boundaries of its mission, and how and when America’s lengthy engagement will end.</p> <p>A crisis between the U.S. and Turkey, triggered by the latter’s new military offensive in Syria, has laid bare how a dizzying array of alliances in Syria is growing even more convoluted in the absence of IS as a major force. Either the Americans must abandon the Kurds who fought alongside them in Syria, or a profound rift with a NATO ally appears all but inevitable.</p> <p>Although Turkey has long been incensed by U.S. military support for Syrian Kurdish fighters, calling them terrorists, the U.S. could make a compelling case while the Kurds spearheaded the anti-IS fight. As IS recedes as an immediate threat, the legs of that argument are falling away, fueling growing Turkish outrage that even the Trump administration acknowledges has some merit.</p> <p>“This is a tough circle to square. It’s the ultimate in heavy diplomatic lifting,” said Frederic Hof, who oversaw Syria policy in the Obama administration’s first term and is now at the Atlantic Council.</p> <p>The Islamic State’s retreat also has forced the U.S. to stretch thinner its legal rationale for operating in Syria. Doing so has raised delicate questions about whether Congress and the American people have truly signed off on a mandate for Syria that goes far beyond killing terrorists.</p> <p>Senior Trump administration officials said they need no additional authorization to be in Syria because IS remains a serious and persistent threat, requiring a continued U.S. presence to ensure it doesn’t regroup and again imperil Syria’s future. To keep IS on its heels, America’s military, diplomats and aid workers will work to stabilize the country and restore basic services in areas freed from IS control, while trying anew to engineer a political solution to the intractable civil war whose chaos IS so effectively exploited.</p> <p>Such arguments create another problem, especially for a president often eager to claim successes: Trump cannot declare victory of any sort against IS in Syria without empowering those who argue IS’ defeat means the U.S. has no business staying in Syria.</p> <p>Small pockets of IS fighters still active in eastern Syria back up the U.S. justification — for now. On Tuesday, American airstrikes killed up to 150 IS fighters at a command center in the area known as the Middle Euphrates River Valley, the U.S.-led coalition said. The U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces — comprised largely of Kurdish fighters — helped.</p> <p>The U.S. sees another threat in al-Qaida’s potential resurgence. It also wants to stem Iran’s growing</p>

influence in Syria and Russia's support for Syrian President Bashar Assad. With Moscow's help, Assad's forces have moved into territory once held by Washington-backed rebels.

The Trump administration's messaging Tuesday highlighted Syria's combustible mix of conundrums for the United States.

In Asia, Defense Secretary James Mattis chastised Turkey for its offensive against the Kurds. And Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in Paris and U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley at the United Nations renewed accusations of Russian complicity in chemical weapons use, following claims of a new attack this week outside Damascus.

"Whoever conducted the attacks, Russia ultimately bears responsibility for the victims," Tillerson said at a meeting designed to ensure accountability for chemical weapons strikes. He noted Russia has twice vetoed U.N. Security Council resolutions to allow inspection teams to prolong and expand probes of alleged chemical attacks.

Trying to explain America's Syria policy last week, Tillerson said the U.S. would retain a military presence there for the foreseeable future to prevent IS or al-Qaida from regaining territory. He cited another objective, too: assisting with reconstruction projects to encourage Syrians to reject Assad.

Turkey's angst about growing Kurdish strength near its border boiled over in recent days with the Turks launching a military operation against Afrin, a Kurdish-held enclave in northern Syria.

Turkey considers Syrian Kurdish forces to be intrinsically linked to the PKK, an insurgency the Turks have battled for decades. The U.S. concurs that PKK fighters are terrorists, but insists that its Kurdish partners in Syria are unconnected to that group.

Turkey and the Kurds, who led the offensive to retake the former IS capital of Raqqa, feel entitled to U.S. support. So the Trump administration has tried to split the difference, acknowledging Turkey's security concerns while urging "restraint." That balance hasn't quelled the situation.

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HEADLINE	01/24 Claim: soldier obsessed w/terror videos
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/0c72edf2bb984e919be8dd3f60ea41ae/Unsealed-documents:-Soldier-obsessed-with-terrorism-videos
GIST	<p>HONOLULU (AP) — A Hawaii-based Army soldier was obsessed with videos depicting terrorism beheadings, suicide bombings and other violence and he watched them in his bedroom for hours every day, a confidential informant told agents who put a tracking device on the soldier's car during an investigation that led to an indictment charging him with attempting to support the Islamic State group.</p> <p>An affidavit supporting the tracking device request and other newly unsealed court documents provide more details about Sgt. 1st Class Ikaika Kang's alleged fixation with Islamic State group violence.</p> <p>Kang told the informant if he became an Islamic State member, he would be a suicide bomber and attack Schofield Barracks, a sprawling Army base outside Honolulu, the affidavit said.</p> <p>The documents were unsealed Monday.</p> <p>Kang has pleaded not guilty and is being detained without bail.</p> <p>The indictment and an FBI affidavit filed previously alleged that Kang met with undercover agents he believed were part of the Islamic State group. He allegedly provided them with classified military information, a drone, military equipment and training in combat fighting.</p>

His defense attorney, Birney Bervar, said Tuesday he hadn't yet seen the unsealed documents. He said previously Kang may suffer from service-related mental health issues that the government was aware of but neglected to treat.

The U.S. government first asked a judge to allow a tracking device on Kang's Lexus sedan in October 2016 and applied for several extensions after orders granting it expired.

Kang watched the violent videos for four to five hours each day during the week and more on the weekends, the informant told agents in 2016. The informant "remembered feeling sick to his stomach, while Kang laughed and insulted the victims," an affidavit filed under seal in May 2017 said.

During the first week of September 2016, Kang told the informant "that if he were to do something like shoot up a large gathering, it would be out of his hatred for white people, the wicked and non-Muslims," the affidavit said.

Kang began researching the Muslim religion in 2014, couldn't wait to move to the Middle East to "join the cause" and was "only in the military for a paycheck," the informant said, according to the affidavit.

Agents said in their applications for a tracking device that they needed to monitor him continuously because they feared he would carry out an attack.

Officials with the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade told the FBI they were concerned over their ability to monitor Kang, noting that he was to return from leave on May 25, 2017 — the same day as a change-of-command ceremony, the affidavit said. Brigade personnel feared the large gathering "represented a target of opportunity for Kang should he want to harm members of the unit."

Kang was arrested in July. Trial is scheduled for later this year.

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HEADLINE	01/23 Twin car bombs Benghazi; 27 killed
SOURCE	http://time.com/5115837/car-bombs-benghazi/?xid=homepage
GIST	<p>(BENGHAZI, Libya) — Twin car bombs exploded as people left a mosque in a residential area of the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi on Tuesday night, killing 27 and wounding over 30 in an attack timed to cause mass casualties among first responders, officials said.</p> <p>Capt. Tarek Alkharraz, spokesman for military and police forces in Benghazi, said the first explosion went off in the Salmani neighborhood around 8:20 p.m. Tuesday and the second bomb went off a half hour later as residents and medics gathered to evacuate the wounded.</p> <p>Local health official Hani Belras Ali said at least 27 people died had died so far and 32 were wounded.</p> <p>No group immediately claimed responsibility for the bombings.</p> <p>The United Nations condemned the attack on social media, saying that direct or indiscriminate attacks on civilians are prohibited under international humanitarian law and constitute war crimes.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 France, US urge Turkey to show restraint
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/turkey-shells-syrian-city-pushes-kurdish-enclave-52544115?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	France's top diplomat and the U.S. defense secretary Tuesday urged Turkey to exercise restraint in its battle against a Syrian Kurdish militia as the Turkish military pressed its operations in north Syria for the

	<p>fourth straight day.</p> <p>Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said intense fighting between Turkish troops and a U.S.-allied Kurdish militia in recent days is a sign that new conflicts could erupt in the region as the Islamic State group is defeated.</p> <p>He warned that without a political solution to the multi-sided Syrian civil war, the region could again explode with conflicts "just as dramatic" as the war on IS.</p> <p>His statement mirrored comments by U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, who warned the fighting was distracting from the war on terror and disrupting humanitarian relief efforts.</p> <p>"The violence in Afrin disrupts what was a relatively stable area of Syria," he said while traveling in Asia. "It distracts from the international efforts to ensure the defeat of ISIS."</p> <p>Turkey's "Operation Olive Branch" against the Kurdish People's Protection Units, or YPG, in north Syria is straining relations with its NATO allies. The U.S. military is a partner of the YPG and operates bases in Kurdish-controlled territory in north Syria.</p> <p>Turkish police have arrested at least 55 people in a sweep against alleged supporters of the YPG inside Turkey, according to Anadolu Agency.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Senior AQ leader: kill Jews, Americans
SOURCE	https://www.afp.com/en/news/717/senior-qaeda-leader-calls-killing-jews-americans-over-jerusalem-doc-xk0ax2
GIST	<p>A senior Al-Qaeda leader has called on Muslims "everywhere" to rise up and kill Jews and Americans in response to US President Donald Trump's decision to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital.</p> <p>In a video released Monday, Khalid Batarfi said Trump's decision was "a declaration of a new Jewish-Crusader war" and every Muslim had a duty to "liberate" the holy city, the SITE Intelligence monitoring group reported.</p> <p>"No Muslim has the right to cede Jerusalem no matter what happens," said Batarfi, a top commander with the group's powerful Yemen-based branch. "Only a traitor would give it up or hand it over."</p> <p>"Let them (Muslims) rise and attack the Jews and the Americans everywhere," he said, in the 18-minute video entitled "Our Duty Towards Our Jerusalem".</p> <p>Breaking with decades of US policy, Trump on December 6 said his administration would recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and move its embassy from Tel Aviv to the city.</p> <p>On Monday, US Vice President Mike Pence pledged to move the embassy by the end of 2019, in a speech to Israel's parliament that saw Arab lawmakers expelled after they shouted in protest.</p> <p>Jerusalem is the third holiest city for Muslims, and the first holy city for Jews.</p> <p>The US decision to recognise Jerusalem triggered protests across the Muslim world, and was also criticised by several US allies.</p> <p>In the video, Batarfi dismissed US allies' protests as not genuine and "nothing but dust thrown in the eyes".</p> <p>"The greatest responsibility lies upon the Muslims in America and the Western countries in the world," he said.</p>

	<p>"The Muslims inside the occupied land must kill every Jew, by running him over, or stabbing him, or by using against him any weapon, or by burning their homes."</p> <p>Batarfi is a senior figure with Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), described by the US as the worldwide jihadist network's most dangerous branch.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/24 Turkey to press on Syria offensive
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/world/2018/01/24/latest-turkey-vows-to-press-on-with-syria-offensive.html
GIST	<p>BEIRUT – The Latest on the Syrian conflict (all times local):</p> <p>12:40 p.m.</p> <p>Turkey's president says its incursion into a Kurdish-held enclave in Syria is progressing "successfully" and will continue until the last "terrorist" is eliminated.</p> <p>Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Wednesday renewed a threat to extend the offensive east to the city of Manbij, which is under the control of U.S.-backed Syrian Kurdish fighters. He said he plans to "foil games along our borders starting from Manbij," adding that "we will clean our region from this trouble completely."</p> <p>Erdogan said that Turkish troops and allied Syrian fighters have killed at least 268 Syrian Kurdish fighters since the operation against the Afrin enclave was launched on Jan. 20. He said Turkish troops have suffered seven or eight losses.</p> <p>Ankara views the main Syrian Kurdish militia in northern Syria as a threat because of its links to Kurdish insurgents fighting in southeastern Turkey. The Syrian Kurds are the main U.S. ally against the Islamic State group in Syria, and played a key role in driving the extremists from much of the country's northeast. The U.S. has urged Turkey, a NATO ally, to exercise restraint.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 US: Russia complicit in Syria atrocities
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2018/01/23/middleeast/us-russia-un-chemical-weapons-syria/index.html
GIST	<p>United Nations (CNN)US Ambassador Nikki Haley and Russian UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia traded verbal jabs Tuesday over the use of chemical weapons in Syria.</p> <p>The two ambassadors gave back-to-back speeches at a hastily called meeting of the UN Security Council, a day after reports emerged that chemical weapons were used in the besieged Syrian town of Douma, in eastern Ghouta.</p> <p>More than 20 civilians, most of them children, were victims of the "apparent chlorine gas attack," US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said in Paris Tuesday.</p> <p>"Russia is running from the facts," Haley said, accusing Assad's regime of being behind the gas attack, and Russia, Assad's ally, of failing to stop it.</p> <p>"We know that for years Russia has looked the other way while their Syrian friends use these despicable weapons of war," she said. "Russia is complicit in the Assad regime's atrocities. Will the Russian Federation say anything at all today about the suffering caused by Assad's barbaric tactics? Will they hold Assad to account? Of course not. They never do."</p> <p>Nebenzia said the United States and others were falsely linking Russia and Assad's government to the use</p>

of chlorine gas.

The reports of the gas attack were uncorroborated, he said, asserting that it's a strange coincidence that the attack is said to have occurred just before 29 nations were set to meet in Paris to discuss ways of preserving evidence of chemical weapons attacks and holding those behind them responsible. Haley had her arms folded throughout the Russian ambassador's remarks.

Haley criticized Russia's "audacity" in lecturing the Security Council on chemical weapons, after it vetoed, three times, the UN mechanism to determine who committed chemical weapons attacks. That mechanism was already working in the view of the United States and its allies, Haley said.

Russia said it has a proposal for a new mechanism to investigate chemical weapons use, but Haley scoffed at the idea and told the Council that anything less than the UN's previous chemical weapons investigative system was "unacceptable."

"We're not going to accept any Russian proposal that undermines our ability to get to the truth or that politicizes what must be an independent and impartial investigation," she said.

Russia's ambassador had smiled at the start of the meeting and apologized for interrupting everyone's lunch and "siesta." Haley complained that the meeting, requested by Russia, was called with "no notice."

At the end of the session, after Haley had left the room, the Russian UN Ambassador asked for the floor to clarify some remarks. He said he was sorry "his friend" Nikki Haley had left the room, but that he is always "pleased to see her."

Nebenzia then accused the United States and other allies of being both "judge and accuser" on chemical weapons use in Syria.

He accused the United States of making premature accusations without an independent investigation. For months, the United States, United Kingdom and others have said Russia uses this tactic to distract from the real issue of chemical weapons use against civilians to support the Assad regime.

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HEADLINE	01/23 Judge: American detainee notice required
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2018/01/23/politics/american-detainee-isis-fighter-pentagon-iraq/index.html
GIST	<p>(CNN)A federal judge ruled Tuesday evening that the Defense Department must provide 72 hours' notice to the attorneys for a US citizen accused of fighting for ISIS and detained in Iraq as an "enemy combatant" if it intends to transfer him to the custody of a third country before his detention challenge at the court is resolved.</p> <p>The ruling, by Judge Tanya S. Chutkan of the US District Court for the District of Columbia, is a compromise that would allow the detainee's attorneys to file an emergency motion contesting the transfer if the government did give notice of its intention.</p> <p>The American Civil Liberties Union, which is representing the unnamed man, has filed a petition for habeas corpus, challenging the legality of his detention by the US government. The detainee, described by the US government as a citizen of both the United States and Saudi Arabia, was turned over to US forces in Syria in September by the Syrian Democratic Forces and taken to Iraq. He has since been held in Iraq under US custody.</p> <p>The US government accuses him of fighting on behalf of ISIS in Syria.</p> <p>Chutkan had ruled last month that the government had to give the individual access to the ACLU to determine if he wanted access as counsel and wanted to challenge his detention, something the man</p>

	<p>affirmed he did earlier this month during an initial video conference with the ACLU.</p> <p>The ACLU says it petitioned for his identity to remain anonymous based on the man's fear for his safety and that of his family.</p> <p>The Department of Justice protested the idea of a required notice in the case of a transfer when the judge floated it at an earlier hearing, saying notice could insert uncertainty and hinder the government's ability to engage in sensitive diplomacy and negotiations. A government attorney noted at the hearing that no final decision to transfer the detainee had yet been made.</p> <p>In a statement, ACLU attorney Jonathan Hafetz said, "The US can't lawlessly hand over Americans to other countries. This ruling helps to ensure that this citizen's rights are respected and that he will receive due process in an American court."</p>
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HEADLINE	01/24 Syria: claims of chemical use are 'lies'
SOURCE	https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-chemical/syria-says-claims-it-uses-chemical-weapons-lies-idUSKBN1FD0TI
GIST	<p>BEIRUT (Reuters) - The Syrian government said on Wednesday that claims by France and the United States that it was still using chemical weapons were "lies".</p> <p>On Tuesday, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the Syrian government may still be using chemical weapons, following a suspected chlorine attack in the rebel enclave of eastern Ghouta on Monday.</p> <p>In a statement carried by state news agency SANA, Syria's foreign ministry said such claims were aimed at "obstructing any effort toward finding a way out of the crisis in Syria".</p> <p>In 2013 Syria said it would give up all of its chemical weapons.</p> <p>In the past two years, a joint U.N. and Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) inquiry found the Syrian government used the nerve agent sarin and several times used chlorine as a weapon.</p> <p>The Syrian army and government have consistently denied using chlorine or other chemical weapons during the war, now in its seventh year.</p> <p>"Syria has always shown cooperation and provided the conditions necessary for an impartial, objective and professional investigation into the use of chemical weapons," SANA said, adding that "the West" had hindered this process for political aims.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/24 Philippines: militant supporter captured
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/philippine-troops-capture-suspected-spanish-terror-supporter-52571201
GIST	<p>Philippine troops have captured a Spanish man they said was carrying grenades and bomb parts and is believed to be a supporter of Islamic State group-linked Abu Sayyaf militants on southern Basilan island, where he acknowledged visiting "the jungle."</p> <p>Capt. Exequiel Pantí and two other army special forces officers filed complaints of illegal possession of explosives Wednesday against Abdelhakim Labidi Adib before Department of Justice prosecutors. Adib denied he owned the two grenades and bomb parts the army officers said they seized from him.</p>

The army officers told prosecutors in the presence of journalists that they captured Adib late Monday in the hinterlands of Basilan's Maluso town, where the Abu Sayyaf has a presence. A local Abu Sayyaf militant with Adib managed to escape, they said.

Adib "is a known Abu Sayyaf sympathizer and ardent supporter for the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the Philippines," Panti and two other army officers said in a joint statement they handed to prosecutors.

After receiving intelligence on the presence of a suspected militant and a foreigner off Maluso town, Panti said he and other army officers set up a checkpoint and later captured Adib, who tried to throw away a backpack containing the grenades, bomb parts, his passport, driver's license and other identification cards.

When Senior Assistant State Prosecutor Peter Ong held up a rifle grenade and a hand grenade, along with a blasting cap and other bomb parts, and asked if they belonged to Adib, the handcuffed 20-year-old shook his head.

Adib told prosecutors he "came from the jungle" in Basilan when asked what places he visited, but refused to say why he traveled there and whom he met.

Adib told a reporter in Spanish that he traveled to the Philippines for the first time last year to meet Filipino women and was on his way back to Manila through southern Zamboanga city when he was arrested. Asked why he visited Basilan, Adib refused to answer and said he was planning to head back to Spain from Manila.

Ong said Adib's Philippine visa has expired and he also faces possible complaints for violation of the country's immigration regulations.

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HEADLINE	01/24 Gunmen attack Afghan children's group
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/insurgents-attack-childrens-group-eastern-afghanistan-52569977
GIST	<p>A group of gunmen stormed a non-governmental children's organization in eastern Nangarhar province, killing one person, said provincial officials.</p> <p>Attahullah Khogyani, spokesman for the provincial governor, said the Wednesday attack was against Save the Children's provincial office in Jalalabad.</p> <p>Inamullah Miakhial, spokesman for Nangarhar regional hospital, said one person was killed and at least 14 wounded were brought to the hospital. The casualty count might rise as a gun battle was still underway, he said.</p> <p>The attack started with a suicide bomber and was followed by gunfire, said Khogyani.</p> <p>Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman, said the Taliban was not involved in the attack; both Taliban insurgents as well as Islamic State group fighters are active in eastern Nangarhar province.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/24 Russia: US derailing peace initiative
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/russia-accuses-us-derail-syria-peace-initiative-52572139?
GIST	A top Russian diplomat has accused the United States of promoting unverified reports about chemical weapons attacks in Syria in order to cloud Russia's peace initiatives.

	<p>Russia is hosting Syria peace talks in the Black Sea resort of Sochi next week that some Syrian opposition figures said will run counter to U.N. peace initiatives.</p> <p>Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said in an interview with the Interfax news agency on Wednesday that the U.S. is promoting "rigged, unverified reports" of the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria to hamper Russia's peace efforts.</p> <p>Ryabkov's remarks came a day after U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said Moscow "ultimately bears responsibility for the victims" of a new suspected chemical attack outside the Syrian capital Damascus.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 US funded Afghan units accused w/abuse
SOURCE	https://www.newsmax.com/newsfront/afghanistan-conflict-us-military/2018/01/23/id/838937/
GIST	<p>The U.S. military funded Afghan police and security units even though American officials knew members were implicated in gross human rights violations, according to a watchdog report released Tuesday.</p> <p>The previously secret report, first provided to Congress in June but now declassified, lays bare the cultural rifts that can exist when America works with local partners.</p> <p>According to the report by the office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), the Pentagon repeatedly granted exemptions from US rules that bar assistance to a foreign nation's security forces if credible information exists of rights violations.</p> <p>For instance, the Pentagon approved waivers to these so-called Leahy Laws to continue funding for 12 Afghan security force units implicated in 14 gross human rights violations in 2013.</p> <p>The same workaround, known as the "notwithstanding clause," was used for eight of nine additional units implicated in 2014.</p> <p>Although the Defense Department and State Department have "confirmed that some units of the Afghan security forces have committed gross violations of human rights, the secretary of defense has used the notwithstanding clause" to some implicated units, the report states.</p> <p>The exemptions were made under then-secretaries Chuck Hagel and Ash Carter.</p> <p>In a response to the report, the Pentagon said the document "does not reflect an understanding of the challenges faced by US forces in Afghanistan in developing and sustaining the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces."</p> <p>Jedidiah Royal, a Pentagon official, wrote that removing the "notwithstanding clause" would remove the defense secretary's ability to balance the Leahy Laws with "national security objectives and the protection of US forces."</p> <p>The report states that as of June 12, 2,106 officials were tracking 75 reported gross violation of human rights incidents, including seven involving child sexual assault.</p> <p>Afghanistan has an entrenched custom of what is known as "bacha bazi" -- or the sexual abuse of boys -- and critics have long accused the US of not doing enough to counter it.</p> <p>In one instance outlined in the report, a US soldier heard Afghan men screaming "in what sounded like sex" but did not take action to report it, SIGAR states.</p> <p>"The full extent of child sexual assault committed by Afghan security forces may never be known," the</p>

	<p>report says.</p> <p>In addition to the seven child sex assault incidents, officials were also tracking extrajudicial killings and the torture of detainees.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Turkey kills Kurds, ISIS in Syria offensive
SOURCE	https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/turkey-kills-at-least-260-kurdish-islamic-state-fighters-in-syria-offensive-military-idUSKBN1FC12J
GIST	<p>ANKARA/BEIRUT (Reuters) - Turkey has killed at least 260 Syrian Kurdish fighters and Islamic State militants in its four-day-old offensive into the Kurdish-dominated Afrin region of northwest Syria, the Turkish military said on Tuesday.</p> <p>U.S. President Donald Trump plans to raise concerns with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan in a phone call expected on Wednesday about Ankara's offensive against U.S.-backed Kurdish YPG forces in Afrin, a senior U.S. official said.</p> <p>French President Emmanuel Macron also voiced disquiet, a few hours after Turkey's foreign minister said it wanted to avoid any clash with U.S., Russian or Syrian government forces during its offensive but would do whatever necessary for its security.</p> <p>The air and ground operation has opened a new front in Syria's multi-sided civil war and could threaten U.S. plans to stabilize and rebuild a large area of northeast Syria - beyond President Bashar al-Assad's control - where Washington helped a force dominated by the YPG to drive out Islamic State militants.</p> <p>The United States and Russia both have military forces in Syria backing opposing sides and have called for restraint on the part of Ankara's "Operation Olive Branch" to crush the YPG in the Afrin region near Turkey's southern border.</p> <p>A senior Trump administration official, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity, said Ankara had sent "conflicting signals" about the scope of the offensive.</p> <p>"We're going to have to see how this develops on the ground. But our message has been unified. We would appreciate it and we would urge them to limit the incursion as much as possible."</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Americans killed in Afghan hotel attack
SOURCE	http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-42796073
GIST	<p>Several Americans were killed and injured in a Taliban raid at a luxury Kabul hotel, US State Department officials said.</p> <p>Saturday's 13-hour siege at the Intercontinental Hotel left more than 20 dead, including a dozen foreigners.</p> <p>"We express our deepest condolences to our American families and to all the victims of the attack," spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in a statement.</p> <p>The state department did not release the exact number of Americans killed.</p> <p>The six Taliban militants who stormed the hotel in suicide vests were looking for foreigners, eyewitnesses say.</p> <p>An eyewitness, who is not being named for security reasons, told the BBC he was spared after saying he</p>

	<p>was an Afghan. "Where are the foreigners?" they shouted.</p> <p>Some 160 people were rescued after Afghan troops fought throughout the night to regain control of the building.</p> <p>Some of the details of the attack remain unclear, but it is reported that in addition to the Americans, seven Ukrainians and one German also died in the attack, officials said.</p> <p>"The attack on the hotel, once again, shows the depravity of terrorists who seek to sow chaos," Ms Nauert said.</p> <p>"We are grateful for the bravery displayed by the Afghan National Defense and Security forces. Had it not been for their speedy recovery of the wounded, more lives may have been lost. We are in close contact with Afghan authorities regarding their investigation and stand firmly by the Afghan government."</p> <p>The Afghan interior minister said the recent decision to transfer security to a private company had been a mistake.</p> <p>The Taliban, which targeted the hotel in 2011, said it was behind the latest attack. A spokesman said in a statement quoted by AFP that the group had "killed tens of foreign invaders and their puppets".</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Iraq seeks aid to rebuild after ISIS
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/world/2018/01/23/iraq-seeks-aid-to-rebuild-after-is-but-donors-could-be-wary.html
GIST	<p>BAGHDAD – Iraq hopes to raise billions of dollars at a conference next month to fund reconstruction after its costly war against the Islamic State group, but many fear the country's endemic corruption could undermine the appeal.</p> <p>Iraq declared victory over the Islamic State group in December after driving the extremists from nearly all the territory they once held, but three years of grueling combat has taken a devastating toll, leaving entire towns and neighborhoods in ruins.</p> <p>Neighboring Kuwait will host an international conference in mid-February aimed at rallying support for Iraq's reconstruction. The United Nations, the United States and Saudi Arabia support the initiative, the details of which have yet to be made public.</p> <p>The U.S. Embassy in Baghdad says the meeting should "provide an important opportunity for the Iraqi government to showcase attractive investment opportunities for foreign investors, including many American companies, and to convince them that Iraq is open for business."</p> <p>Iraqi officials have estimated they will need up to \$100 billion to rebuild after the war against IS. Mosul — Iraq's second largest city — was one of the hardest hit areas. Some 40,000 homes there need to be rebuilt or restored, according to a preliminary study conducted by the U.N.</p> <p>Taha Abdul-Ghani, a councilman in the western Anbar province, where the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi sustained heavy damage, said the government "is not able to reconstruct anything," and expressed hope that donor countries would step in to fill the void.</p> <p>But many donors may be reluctant to invest in Iraq, an oil-rich country that ranks among the most corrupt in the world, according to Transparency International. The watchdog recently warned that "corruption risks" in Iraq are exacerbated by the country's "weak capacity to absorb the influx of aid money."</p> <p>Many recall the billions of dollars that poured into Iraq after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion, much of which</p>

	<p>was lost to corruption. Nearly 15 years on, residents of Baghdad, which was far from the front lines in the war against IS, still experience regular power blackouts and complain of poor public services.</p> <p>After a recent visit to Mosul, Geert Cappelaere, the regional director of the U.N. children's agency, said Iraq's government would not be able to cope with the "incredible" reconstruction needs on its own. But he said it must prove it can be held accountable, and must provide some of the funding on its own.</p> <p>A senior official at Iraq's Ministry of Housing, Reconstruction and Municipality said this time would be different.</p> <p>"I agree that in the past, money was squandered on unnecessary or not important projects in non-transparent ways," Deputy Minister Jabir Abid Khaji told The Associated Press. But he said this time, the "close follow-up, attention and right management" would lead to better results.</p> <p>The most urgent priority is to rebuild housing and infrastructure to allow the more than 2 million people displaced by the conflict to return home. But Cappelaere said sustained development will require a greater investment in the country's citizens.</p> <p>"It's beautiful to have nice bridges and roads being built," he said. "But if it doesn't come with investment in education and getting the best teachers... As long as Iraq does not prioritize investment in human capital, this country is going to go nowhere."</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Taliban claim meeting w/Pakistan officials
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/world/2018/01/23/taliban-say-met-with-pakistani-officials.html
GIST	<p>ISLAMABAD – The Taliban say five of its members met with Pakistani officials in the capital, Islamabad, to discuss ways of ending the war in neighboring Afghanistan.</p> <p>Pakistan is under mounting pressure from the United States to cut ties with the militants, who regularly attack U.S. and Afghan forces and who stormed a luxury hotel in Kabul this week, killing 22 people, including Americans.</p> <p>The group confirmed the meeting in a statement circulated Tuesday via WhatsApp, saying it favored a political settlement to the Afghanistan conflict without providing further details. It did not name the officials.</p> <p>News reports citing unnamed officials reported the meeting last week.</p> <p>Earlier this month Washington suspended hundreds of millions of dollars in military aid to Pakistan, accusing it of giving sanctuary to Taliban insurgents, charges Pakistan denies.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Military: strikes killed ISIS in Syria
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/us/2018/01/23/us-strikes-kill-up-to-150-islamic-state-fighters-in-syria.html
GIST	<p>WASHINGTON – U.S. military officials say American airstrikes in Syria on Saturday killed up to 150 Islamic State fighters in a command center in the Middle Euphrates River Valley.</p> <p>The U.S.-led coalition fighting the Islamic State says the strikes were near As Shafah, which is north of Abu Kamal in eastern Syria. They targeted an IS headquarters and were assisted by Syrian Democratic Forces who watched the area before the attack.</p> <p>The coalition says there was a heavy concentration of fighters at the site and they appeared to be preparing</p>

to move. The large number of fighters killed in the attack underscores U.S. assertions that the Islamic State group continues to be a threat in Syria and hasn't been defeated.

The coalition says only IS fighters were killed in the strikes.

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Suspicious, Unusual

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HEADLINE	01/23 Hawaii emergency management fumbles
SOURCE	https://www.hawaii247.com/2018/01/23/hawaii-emergency-management-agency-fumbles-again/
GIST	<p>Hawaii residents were left in the dark once again by the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency when they went looking for tsunami evacuation maps in preparation during a tsunami watch early Tuesday (Jan 23).</p> <p>A severe earthquake near Alaska triggered a Tsunami Watch for the State of Hawaii. Hawaii County has tsunami evacuation maps on their website so those on Hawaii Island had access to information in preparation for the worst but anyone relying on Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (former State Civil Defense) ended up seeing a notice about the federal government shutdown. The notice says, 'Specific NOAA websites necessary to protect lives and property are operational and will be maintained.' but that wasn't the case for Hawaii residents preparing to protect their lives and property.</p> <p>Hawaii deserves better than this as Hawaii Emergency Management Agency has fumbled twice in as many weeks. Once with the false missile attack warning and now this. Some hard questions and answers are needed to keep our citizens safe.</p> <p>The HI-EMA Tsunami Evacuation Zones page can be found here: dod.hawaii.gov/hiema/public-re...</p> <p>UPDATED (1/23/2018)</p> <p>As of Tuesday morning (Jan 23) the HI-EMA Tsunami Evacuation Zone webpage has the embedded interactive map working again. The page has added links to the individual county Civil Defense/Emergency Management Agency websites so people can locate evacuation maps for their coastal areas in Hawaii.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Many Alaskans didn't receive alerts
SOURCE	http://www.ktuu.com/content/news/Many-Alaskans-wondering-why-theyre-left-out-of-mobile-emergency-alerts-470799843.html
GIST	<p>ANCHORAGE (KTUU) - As emergency tsunami alert warnings were sent out by Anchorage's office of emergency management, Alaska news rooms and others Monday night, many Alaskans received an alert through their phone's "Emergency Alert" function – but many other Alaskans were left wondering how and why they were left out.</p> <p>The alerts were later canceled after a destructive wave failed to build.</p> <p>It was just more than a week after Hawaiians, and a number of Alaskans vacationing in the islands, were alerted by that same function to a ballistic missile threat, which turned out to be sent in error.</p> <p>Back in Alaska on Tuesday, many people who use GCI for their mobile phone service were left wondering why they did not receive an Emergency Alert for Monday night's tsunami warning. GCI says it all boils down to which mobile carriers are currently required to participate in the Wireless Emergency Alert network, and how complicated the system is to put in place.</p>

The Wireless Emergency Alert system, which allows wireless phones and other enabled mobile devices to receive geographically-targeted alert messages, is required of the largest mobile phone carriers across the country, but GCI and other small carriers have a timeline waiver, says Heather Handyside, the senior director of corporate communications for the company.

“This is a system that the Federal Communications Commission requires of carriers and providers across the nation, but it’s a very labor intensive and complicated process,” Handyside said Tuesday afternoon.

GCI and other small carriers have until May of 2019 to comply with the requirement by the Federal Communications Commission to participate, Handyside said. The Commission says all non-participating carriers must notify their customers that they are not part of the network.

“We’ve been working on it about five or six months, and we’re close to the end of the process,” Handyside said of GCI’s work to comply with the technical and operational requirements. She said the company hopes to be part of the Wireless Emergency Alert Network in the next few months.

In the meantime, GCI has an app, called GCI Alerts, that customers can install, which would sign them up for those alerts.

Handyside says the company periodically sends e-mails and text messages to customers about the app’s availability, and with this past week’s events, would likely be sending another one.

“Repetition is the best way to let people know,” Handyside said. “Also when these kind of incidents happen it’s a great opportunity to educate folks. We’ll be sending out another customer e-mail today to remind people to download the app,” Handyside said.

Once the app is downloaded, there are settings as to how the alerts appear and sound, and which alerts you will receive.

The FCC says you should ask your wireless carrier if it is part of the Wireless Emergency Alert network.

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HEADLINE	01/23 Clark Co. firefighters wear flu masks
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SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/878056/clark-county-firefighters-to-wear-masks-to-prevent-flu/
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GIST	<p>PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — A Washington county public health department is requiring firefighters and paramedics to wear flu masks during all patient-care calls and in-hospital visits in response to flu threats.</p> <p>The mandate began Jan. 18 and will be in effect until further notice.</p> <p>Clark County Fire District EMS Training Captain Eric Simukka who has worked in the field for more than 20 years says it’s the first time he has seen a mandate of this kind.</p> <p>Simukka says all firefighters and paramedics will be required to wear a mask whether they have gotten a flu shot or not.</p> <p>KATU-TV reports positive flu tests have skyrocketed in Clark County north of Portland.</p> <p>The droplet flu mask prevents the spread of airborne viruses through coughing, sneezing or breathing.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Experts: China surveillance to Guam
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SOURCE	https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2018/01/23/Report-Chinas-maritime-surveillance-extends-to-Guam/2181516717045/?utm_source=fp&utm_campaign=ts_tn_int&utm_medium=6
GIST	<p>Jan. 23 (UPI) -- Chinese acoustic sensors may be picking up signals between U.S. submarines in the South China Sea and their command base, according to military experts familiar with the technology.</p> <p>The deployment of surveillance began in 2016, but its use in the high seas was not disclosed until this month, the South China Morning Post reported.</p> <p>The Chinese government has stated the sensors have a listening range of 620 miles and are being used to analyze earthquakes, weather patterns and wildlife.</p> <p>But experts who spoke to the Post said they can also be used to intercept underwater signals.</p> <p>China has installed two acoustic sensors at key locations: the Challenger Deep of the Mariana Trench, and at a point near Yap, an island in the Federated States of Micronesia.</p> <p>Both locations are less than 400 miles away from Guam, where the United States retains its biggest military base in the Western Pacific.</p> <p>The technology could be picking up on submarine communications, said an unnamed Chinese military expert.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Dead cattle found at Skagit Co. farm
SOURCE	http://www.king5.com/article/news/local/dozens-more-dead-cattle-found-at-skagit-county-farm/281-510962358
GIST	<p>Skagit County authorities found 54 dead cattle on a farm with a history of complaints. A sheriff's department drone spotted the cows in what neighbor Kevin Gaegon has called a "killing field."</p> <p>For Gaegon, the sheriff's drone investigation was 13 years in the making.</p> <p>"It's a glorious day for everyone," he said, tears welling up in his eyes.</p> <p>Gaegon first reported dead cows being illegally discarded on the Bayview neighborhood ranch in 2005.</p> <p>At that time, officials found 172 dead cattle littering the farm owned by Roger Pederson.</p> <p>Pederson was cited and sentenced to probation, but the mistreatment of his animals apparently didn't stop.</p> <p>Gaegon complained again in 2009. KING 5 cameras spotted at least one carcass rotting in waters that lead to nearby Padilla Bay, posing a serious public health risk.</p> <p>Last week, Gaegon captured video of a front loader dumping even more remains.</p> <p>Then authorities discovered another 54 dead cattle this week, plus one living in cruel conditions.</p> <p>"We had to actually euthanize one yesterday," said Skagit County Chief Deputy Chad Clark. "It looked like it was being eaten by a coyote and was still alive."</p> <p>Veterinarians helped identify the sickest of the approximately 200 remaining animals. An estimated 20 to 40 of them were taken to farms where they will be nursed back to health.</p> <p>It's unclear how these latest cattle died, but the suspicion is they were malnourished and neglected.</p>

<p>Return to Top</p>	<p>Over the past 13 years, county officials have been heavily criticized for not doing enough to stop the slaughter.</p> <p>When KING 5 News inquired about the situation on Monday, Skagit County Health Department official Joanne Lynn said, "I intend to make sure this behavior stops. We will not tolerate it."</p> <p>She kept her word, and more than a decade after starting down this road, Kevin Gaegon is relieved.</p> <p>"My confidence level wasn't real high just because of the history," he said. "I'm glad it's being done. 13 years was not for nothing."</p> <p>Chief Deputy Clark said Pederson could potentially face animal cruelty charges, a Class C felony.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Dog bites man, man bites dog: arrested
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/new-hampshire-boscawen-man-charged-with-biting-police-dog-veda/
GIST	<p>BOSCAWEN, N.H. -- A New Hampshire man has been charged with resisting arrest and biting a police dog. Police said the man unsuccessfully tried to hide under a pile of clothes to evade arrest over the weekend and then put the police dog in a chokehold and bit it on the head.</p> <p>State police were asked to help deal with a shooting on Sunday in Boscawen, a town of about 4,000 residents. They said two men in a home were wanted on outstanding warrants and both resisted arrest before one exchanged bites with the dog, whose name is Veda.</p> <p>Police haven't released the men's names. They say the man who bit the dog faces charges including resisting arrest, interfering with a police dog and assaulting an officer.</p> <p>"Both of them resisted arrest and one very strongly resisted arrest. He bit the dog, the dog bit him, he ended up getting Tasered," Lt. Jason Killary of the Boscawen Police Department told Reuters news agency. "If you get into a biting competition with a police dog, you're not going to win. They're pretty good at that."</p> <p>The New Hampshire Canine Trooper's Association posted an image of Veda on Facebook and said the dog has been cleared medically to return to duty.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Philadelphia backs safe injection sites
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/philadelphia-elected-officials-back-safe-injection-sites-to-curb-overdose-deaths/
GIST	<p>PHILADELPHIA -- Philadelphia wants to become the first U.S. city to allow supervised drug injection sites as a way to combat the opioid epidemic, officials announced Tuesday. They said they are seeking outside operators to establish one or more in the city.</p> <p>Public Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas Farley said the sites could be "a life-saving strategy and a pathway to treatment," and would be just one piece of the city's overall plan to fight the epidemic.</p> <p>"No one here condones or supports illegal drug use in any way," Farley said. "We want people saddled with drug addiction to get help."</p> <p>Safe injection sites are locations where people can shoot up under the supervision of a doctor or nurse who can administer an overdose antidote if necessary. Critics have argued the sites may undermine prevention</p>

	<p>and treatment, and seem to fly in the face of laws aimed at stopping use of deadly illicit drugs.</p> <p>Philadelphia has the highest opioid death rate of any large U.S. city. More than 1,200 people fatally overdosed in Philadelphia in 2017, one-third more than 2016.</p> <p>"I started completely, totally adamant against this," said Philadelphia Police Commissioner Richard Ross.</p> <p>Ross still hasn't completely embraced the idea of safe injection sites, CBS Philadelphia reports. He said he still has a lot of questions, but after speaking with law enforcement colleagues in Vancouver, Canada, a pioneer in opening the sites, he says he has an open mind.</p> <p>"There's a lot of lives being lost and that is something that, in the world of public safety, we certainly cannot just throw our hands up and say, 'That's not my problem,'" said Ross.</p> <p>Others may be harder to convince, concedes Health Commissioner Tom Farley. For those, he stressed the city is not condoning drug use but called the sites "one important piece of an overall strategy to address the opioid crisis because it will save lives."</p> <p>The city hopes to hear from operators interested in setting up the injection sites -- which they are calling comprehensive user engagement sites -- where the city would provide outreach services.</p> <p>Other cities have proposed similar safe havens. No U.S. city has established such a site, though Seattle has set aside \$1.3 million to create a safe injection site there. Such sites are operating in Canada and Europe.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Phone scam targets Tacoma utility customers
SOURCE	http://www.king5.com/article/news/local/new-phone-scam-hitting-tacoma-utility-customers/281-511063381
GIST	<p>A new phone scam is targeting customer of Tacoma Public Utilities. The agency posted a warning on their Facebook page Tuesday evening.</p> <p>"We're hearing reports of scammers, pretending to be TPU, calling homes and businesses, threatening to disconnect utility service unless they receive immediate payment by prepaid cards," the post read.</p> <p>Scammers are using recorded voice prompts and greetings from TPU and using caller ID spoofing technology, to appear as though they are calling from TPU.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 NKorea taunts: US trembling w/fear
SOURCE	https://www.newsmax.com/newsfront/hawaii-false-alarm-icbms-nuclear-weapons/2018/01/23/id/839003/
GIST	<p>North Korea taunted the United States on Tuesday for the false missile alert sent to Hawaii residents Jan. 13 — and boasted the regime's ICBMs have Americans "trembling with fear," Fox News reported.</p> <p>According to Fox News, the state-run Korean Central News Agency bragged the incident has the United States rattled.</p> <p>"The U.S . . . is now on jitters, being seized by 'fear of the north's missiles,'" the KCNA statement read, Fox News reported. "A ballistic missile threat warning was released throughout Hawaii, U.S. by a mistake recently.</p> <p>"It is none other than the U.S. which is trembling with fear, stricken by extreme horror and pressure even</p>

	<p>by a single message and by a flash in the sky."</p> <p>"The mindset of the panic-stricken Americans is that the higher the level of confrontation with the [Democratic People's Republic of Korea], the world-level nuclear power and a rocket power, the higher the level of disaster to be inflicted upon them," the statement said, Fox News reported.</p> <p>Within days of the Hawaii mistake, Japanese broadcaster NHK also issued an alert saying "North Korea appears to have fired a missile" — when no launch occurred in the region. The news program apologized for the mistake, which it blamed on "equipment to send a news flash onto the Internet" that "had been incorrectly operated."</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Wild horses facing govt. slaughter
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/US/wild-horses-facing-slaughter-us-government-proposes-regulations/story?id=52538898&cid=clicksource_81_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>A wild mustang charging across an open plain is a symbol of the untamed majesty of nature. But the predators chasing these horses are anything but natural.</p> <p>Controversy has broken out over the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) practice of using helicopters to herd horses off public lands and sometimes permanently put them into holding facilities in an effort to control their population.</p> <p>"Sometimes these horses get stampeded for miles and miles," said Simone Netherlands, an animal rights activist.</p> <p>Now the government is considering culling these animals for the first time in nearly 50 years, putting the lives of thousands of wild horses at stake.</p> <p>Most of the U.S.'s estimated 75,000 wild horses live on public lands, usually vast expanses that the government controls in the American West.</p> <p>Jim Schnepel, who knows Utah's Onaqui Range and its horses well, works with a non-profit desperately trying to find a humane and effective way to control the wild horse population.</p> <p>"Anybody who loves horses can tell you there's this natural connection you can develop with them," Schnepel said. "Certainly with specific members, you know, there's no doubt that a few of them recognize me and I reckon I definitely recognize them."</p> <p>Although the land seems limitless, the BLM says the resources here only allow for the survival of a certain number.</p> <p>"They've set what they call 'appropriate management level,' AML," Schnepel said. "It would be about 75 percent reduction for what we have right now."</p> <p>Horses aren't the only animals on the range. Sheep, cows and other livestock also share the land.</p> <p>The BLM controls one-eighth of the country's landmass, but leases over 60 percent of it to ranchers. Since their livestock rely on the same resources the wild horses do, some ranchers want the wild horses pushed off the land entirely.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/22 Iran threatens US Navy during drills
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SOURCE	http://freebeacon.com/national-security/iran-threatens-u-s-navy-ships-amid-massive-war-drills/
GIST	<p>Iranian military leaders claimed Monday that they threatened two American-led vessels in international waters amid a series of new war drills being carried out by the Islamic Republic, according to regional reports and U.S. military officials who confirmed to the Washington Free Beacon contact with the Iranian vessels.</p> <p>As Iran carries out a several days long series of war drills in the Sea of Oman, off the country's southern border, military leaders claim to have warned off at least two vessels led by U.S. coalition forces in the region.</p> <p>U.S. military officials confirmed being in contact with Iranian forces, which is just the latest in a series of provocative interactions between the Iranian military and United States.</p> <p>"One U.S. warship operating in the Gulf of Oman received a transmission from Iranian maritime forces announcing an Iranian exercise," Cmdr. William Urban, a spokesman for U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, told the Free Beacon Monday evening.</p> <p>U.S military officials say the military vessel continued to carry out its mission, despite the Iranian contact and did not alter its course.</p> <p>"The U.S. warship continued to execute its mission and did not alter operations as a result of the radio transmission," Urban said. "U.S. warships continue to sail and operate wherever international law allows.</p> <p>Iranian military leaders had a different version of events, claiming in comments that two U.S.-led warships were instructed to leave the waters where the drills were being held after they were detected by drone surveillance.</p> <p>"This morning and in the first hours of the drills, two warships of the coalition which had approached the drills zone to monitor the Iranian Navy units were identified by the Navy drones," Rear Admiral Seyed Mahmoud Moussavi, who is leading the Iranian war drills, was quoted as telling Iran's state-controlled press outlets.</p> <p>"After declaring the issue to the drills' tactical base, the patrolling and reconnaissance planes flew over the coalition warships and warned them [to leave the region] and the warships left the drills zone," according to Moussavi.</p> <p>Iran is in the midst of another set of war drills aimed at testing new military hardware.</p> <p>Iran's Army, Navy, and Air Defense forces are all participating in the war drills, which will continue for at least the next two days, according to Iran's media.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/24 More details w/13 captive children
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/california-couple-house-of-horrors-to-face-restraining-order-13-children/
GIST	<p>Prosecutors are moving to legally separate David and Louise Turpin from the 13 children they allegedly held captive. The Southern California couple has pleaded not guilty to multiple charges of torture, child abuse and false imprisonment. Some 20 people have offered to take guardianship of the Turpin children.</p> <p>After last week's initial appearance before a judge, David and Louise Turpin are expected back in court Wednesday to face a restraining order. They are accused of abuse that lasted for years, including putting</p>

some of their 13 children in chains, reports CBS News correspondent David Begnaud.

With the children's expected release from the hospital this week, a source tells CBS News officials want to make sure they do not visit their parents in jail, fearing any conversations could taint the on-going investigation.

The Turpins' arrest reportedly came as they were planning to move to Oklahoma. A source tells CBS News the children told authorities their father was either recently transferred or fired.

Louise Turpin's brother told "Inside Edition" that dressing the siblings alike was done partly to position the family as future reality TV stars.

"I believe that my sister wanted a reality show because, you know, the very last conversation I had with her, before all this happened, she did actually say that she feels that they would be perfect for TV at one point," Billy Lambert said. He said she bragged about having more kids than the star of "Kate Plus 8," which was among the hundreds of DVDs found in the family's garage.

Another relative, David's brother, Randy Turpin, is the president of a Christian college in Ohio. He wrote a book about the spiritual benefits of fasting. A source close to the investigation told CBS News Randy told authorities in California on Tuesday that he wanted to explore the possibility of adopting the children. But before those discussions can happen, officials want to talk to him about another matter: whether he knew about the past abuse.

Officials insist their top priority for the children, whose names we've learned all start with the letter "J," is their ongoing well-being.

"We've heard that all the adult kids are together at the hospital, why is that?" Begnaud asked Mary Parks, who works with Riverside County's Department of Public Social Services.

"Whether you are in foster care, available for adoption, or whatever the case may be... we make every effort possible to keep those siblings together," Parks said.

All the siblings are still being cared for in hospitals near their home in Riverside County, California. But that's about to change. A source tells us the county has won conservatorship over the adult children, and they'll move to a supervised living facility Wednesday. And starting Thursday, the six minor children will be split up to live in two foster homes.

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HEADLINE	01/23 Gang violence rise in metro Vancouver?
SOURCE	https://bc.ctvnews.ca/is-gang-violence-on-the-rise-in-metro-vancouver-1.3772966
GIST	<p>The death of a 15-year-old boy caught in the crossfire of a brazen public shootout in Vancouver earlier this month is indicative of an alarming uptick in gang violence in the Lower Mainland, Police Chief Adam Palmer says.</p> <p>"We haven't seen gang violence like this probably in the last 10 years," he told reporters Monday. "We've got several groups that are at odds with one another and they're going out and killing each other."</p> <p>Palmer said the region is currently experiencing levels of violence between organized crime groups that harken back to the mid-2000s, when an escalating turf war between gangs known as the United Nations and Red Scorpions culminated in one of the most infamous mass murders in the province's history.</p> <p>Two bystanders, Christopher Mohan and Ed Schellenberg, were among six people killed in an execution-style massacre at a high-rise apartment building in Surrey in October 2007. The event would become known as the "Surrey Six" murders.</p>

The tit-for-tat public shootings between the rival groups claimed other innocent lives too, including a stereo installer who unknowingly picked up gangster Jamie Bacon's Porsche moments before the car was sprayed by gunfire.

"These kinds of tragedies are not unusual. Usually, when they occur, it's because the groups have lost control of themselves and their members," said Rob Gordon, a criminology professor at Simon Fraser University.

"If you go back 20 years, 25 years, a lot of this activity around the illegal drug trade was controlled by Hells Angels. I never thought I'd hear myself saying this, but I miss those days because they had a great deal more regulation and more control over their members and were focused on the primary activity, which was making profit from the drug trade."

These violence conflicts, Gordon said, are now being exacerbated "as a result impending legalization" of drugs such as marijuana in Canada and parts of the United States.

"We've gone into a system of regulation and taxation. That's taken a bite out of profits and think there's a lot of struggle going on over the new shape that the illegal drug trade is going to take and is already taking in this province."

On Jan 13., that struggle led to the death of 15-year-old Alfred Wong, who was killed by a gangster's bullet during a running gun battle on East Broadway. The Coquitlam teen was in the back seat of his parents' car when he was struck by a stray bullet. Wong died in hospital two days later.

Kevin Whiteside, a 23-year-old with gang ties who police believe was involved in the shooting, was also killed during the gunfight.

A 30-year-old bystander from Vancouver suffered minor injuries and was treated at the scene.

While it's not often that members of the public are injured or killed in gang-related crimes, Gordon said events such as these "jerk us all out of complacency" and shine the spotlight on the tragic consequences of organized crime.

"This particular shooting points to the tragedies that are associated with (gang violence) and why we should not, as a society, tolerate it," he said. "We're sort of used to shootings taking place. It's easy to dismiss them as a bunch of scoundrels settling scores."

When gang violence claims the lives of innocent people, the intense police attention also tends to put turf wars on pause, the professor said.

"In some sense, this is a culmination, but we'll have to see whether or not this particular incident shuts it down because that's typically what happens," he said. "You get a dreadful tragedy, and everybody chills out."

"The pattern is for this to die away and then come back up again and it will continue to do that so long as we don't come to grips with illegal drugs and the illegal drug trade."

Vancouver police say they're determined to do just that, sending a clear message to criminals Monday.

"If you are a gang member in the Metro Vancouver area, there's a good chance that the police are coming after you," Palmer said.

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SOURCE	http://www.govtech.com/public-safety/Chicago-Police-Cut-Crime-with-Major-Upgrades-to-Analytics-and-Field-Technology.html
GIST	<p>The Chicago Police Department (CPD) is deploying predictive and analytic tools after seeing initial results and delivering on a commitment from Mayor Rahm Emanuel, a bureau chief said recently.</p> <p>The issue, as the mayor said during his 2018 Annual Budget Address on Oct. 18, is how best to ensure that a rise in shootings and murders dating to 2015 continues to decline. Emanuel emphasized and police officials agree that using the latest in IT, including video surveillance and computer analysis of incidents, is reducing violent crime in the city.</p> <p>Last year, CPD created six Strategic Decision Support Centers (SDSCs) at police stations, essentially local nerve centers for its high-tech approach to fighting crime in areas where incidents are most prevalent.</p> <p>“I’m happy to say that in the first six districts that went live, we were able to tie together a range of technology into a single platform,” Lewin said during a discussion of “Paving the Way for Connected Emergency Vehicles.”</p> <p>Connecting features like predictive mapping and policing, gunshot detection, surveillance cameras and citizen tips lets police identify “areas of risk, and ties all these things together into a very consumable, very easy to use, very understandable platform,” said Lewin.</p> <p>“The predictive policing component ... the intelligence analyst and that daily intelligence cycle, is really important along with the room itself, which I didn’t talk about,” Lewin said in an interview.</p> <p>“There’s an actual physical room that’s built out in each of these districts. It’s like a fusion center, but it’s an actual room,” he added.</p> <p>The nation’s second-largest police department also has a large-scale deployment under way of ShotSpotter, the gunshot detection technology. It’s currently live in three of the city’s 22 policing districts with plans to add a fourth by the end of January and two more this spring.</p> <p>Ultimately, CPD intends to add ShotSpotter in 13 districts by summer, covering areas where crime is highest, according to Lewin.</p> <p>“It will be the largest ShotSpotter deployment in the U.S. It will be in about 110 square miles,” he said.</p> <p>Results thus far are promising. Citywide, shootings dropped 21 percent in 2017 compared to 2016, Lewin told the audience; and in districts No. 7 and 11, on the city’s southern and western sides — home to the first two SDSCs — shootings are down 33 percent.</p> <p>In each of the six districts initially equipped with SDSCs, shootings declined an average of 20 percent, CPD First Deputy Superintendent Kevin Navarro said in October.</p> <p>In a video presented at CES, CPD said its strategy of “smarter policing, fewer victims” includes SDSC personnel using data analysis and technology to provide officers with real-time information and deploy them more effectively; crime forecasting software to identify areas most at risk for violence; and “360-degree feedback” to analyze data transmitted from officers in the field.</p> <p>“The ultimate goal of the SDSCs is to provide a process and environment for collaboration and analysis, resulting in fewer injuries,” according to the CPD video.</p> <p>Most CPD patrol vehicles now have in-car cameras, while some have license plate readers. The department is moving toward equipping vehicles with wireless routers — ultimately connecting in-car and body-worn cameras and offering on-demand, real-time streaming.</p> <p>CPD partners with the University of Chicago crime lab on data analysis and has worked with the New</p>

York City Police Department to develop best practices. But Lewin acknowledged in a tweet last year the department will likely continue to face challenges.

“We have literally hundreds of millions of rows of data. And how do you develop insights from all these different data points, how do you translate them into actual intelligence? That’s what we’re very focused on right now,” he said.

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HEADLINE	01/23 Man jailed for life ‘buying rape kids’
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/cd931b7e7db8479dba103b040cf3b717/California-man-gets-life-for-buying-Filipino-children
GIST	<p>SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — A California man was sentenced to life in federal prison Tuesday for buying Filipino children for sex and pornography in what prosecutors called one of most “lurid, willful, and disturbing” child exploitation cases in the nation.</p> <p>U.S. District Judge John Mendez said he was sickened by the crimes committed by Michael Carey Clemans, 57, of Sacramento.</p> <p>Prosecutors said he gave detailed instructions on how young girls should be posed, how their hair should be cut, whether they should wear makeup or have their bodies oiled.</p> <p>“His true plan was to find young girls, virgins, and then go have sex with them,” Assistant U.S. Attorney Andre Espinosa said. “A 57-year-old man doesn’t have sex with a 7-year-old girl — he rapes her.”</p> <p>The sentence came after defense attorney Daniel Olmos argued that the judge should consider Clemans’ cooperation in helping authorities catch his co-conspirators.</p> <p>But Mendez agreed with prosecutors, saying the “unthinkable, inexcusable” crimes outweighed the assistance.</p> <p>“He has taken away the childhood of those victims,” Mendez said.</p> <p>Clemans was an Army veteran with no criminal record who lived in Bangkok for two years while working as a pilot for a small airline. He later returned to Sacramento and lived with his mother while traveling to the Philippines several times.</p> <p>He had “another side to his life,” Mendez said. “Mr. Clemans is a dangerous man. A danger particularly to children.”</p> <p>Authorities said Clemans began conspiring with a woman in the Philippines in 2014 to produce child pornography and obtain girls.</p> <p>He sent the woman, Lyan Tandeg, nearly \$6,000 for equipment she used to photograph naked children so he could decide which ones he would rape when he traveled to the country, authorities said.</p> <p>He directed her to find orphans, victims of typhoons and other vulnerable victims. He paid a co-conspirator, Shellina Atad, to obtain temporary custody of Filipino children and produce child pornography, authorities said.</p> <p>Investigators found three of the children who posed for the pornographic photos, including one called “Angel,” when they were 7, 9, and 10.</p> <p>Prosecutors brought them from the Philippines to Sacramento to testify at Clemans’ trial.</p>

Tandeg and Atad were arrested in 2015 and sentenced to 15-year prison terms in the Philippines, according to court documents.

At one point, authorities said Clemans was communicating with more than 50 child pornography providers and obtained more than 27,000 child pornography images.

The internet and ease of global banking make it extremely easy for child pornographers to communicate, buy and sell children and pornography, and hide their identities, U.S. Attorney McGregor Scott said in highlighting 40 central California convictions over the last four years that brought sentences of 15 years or more.

“The internet is borderless,” said Ryan Spradlin, special agent in charge of the U.S. Homeland Security Investigations office in San Francisco. “An image on the web of a child being sexually abused can be seen by anyone anywhere in the world.”

Olmos acknowledged the “abhorrent” crimes but argued that Clemans should receive some sentencing consideration because he had a clean criminal record, accepted responsibility and let investigators use his online accounts to set up his co-conspirators for prosecution.

A jury found Clemans guilty in September of buying children, conspiracy and traveling with intent to engage in illicit sexual conduct. He previously pleaded guilty to conspiracy, producing and receiving child pornography.

Olmos said Clemans will appeal his life sentence. Clemans stood seemingly emotionless during the hearing, but Mendez let him hug his parents and other family members before he was led away.

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HEADLINE	01/24 Elite police unit filled by rogue cops?
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/0039e34a3b964498bfe45170a5972863/Prosecutor:-Elite-police-unit-made-up-of-rogue-officers
GIST	<p>BALTIMORE (AP) — A federal prosecutor described an elite Baltimore police unit as a “perfect storm” of rogue officers in opening statements Tuesday at the trial of two detectives charged in one of the largest scandals in the city police force’s history.</p> <p>“They were, simply put, both cops and robbers at the same time,” said Leo Wise, one of the assistant U.S. attorneys tasked with prosecuting the Gun Trace Task Force.</p> <p>Members of the disbanded unit of the Baltimore Police Department are accused of extortion and robberies, falsifying evidence, reselling seized drugs and habitually defrauding their department with bogus overtime claims.</p> <p>Detectives Daniel Hersl and Marcus Taylor are two of eight indicted members of the once-lauded unit, which was tasked with getting illegal guns off the streets of a city plagued by violent crime. They have pleaded not guilty to racketeering and robbery charges.</p> <p>Six other indicted Baltimore officers — all task force members — have pleaded guilty in recent months. Four of them will testify as witnesses for the government during the trial, according to Wise. All of the indicted Baltimore officers have been in jail since their arrests last year.</p> <p>In mid-November, a Philadelphia police officer became the ninth law enforcement agent indicted in the scandal, prosecutors alleging he conspired with task force member Jemell Rayam to sell heroin and cocaine seized in Baltimore.</p> <p>Maurice Ward, one of the indicted Baltimore detectives who have pleaded guilty, began his testimony</p>

Tuesday, detailing brazen robberies and other instances of rampant corruption during his time on the force. He described tactics including hiding tracking devices on the cars of robbery targets and routine “door pops” — driving fast at a group of people and then chasing after those who ran to search them for narcotics or cash.

He alleged that Gun Trace Task Force supervisor Sgt. Wayne Jenkins — who allegedly kept duffel bags at the ready stuffed with tools to pry open safes along with black ski masks and other gear — randomly quizzed people he stopped for the names of top drug dealers in order to target them for future robberies. He recounted unchecked profiling of suspects and searching people’s properties and vehicles with no probable cause.

Hersl’s defense attorney, William Purpura, is not denying that his 48-year-old client took money — which he described as an act that “embarrassed” the city and the detective’s family — but that the evidence will show it didn’t rise to charges of robbery or extortion.

“It was a crime of theft, a crime of the moment,” Purpura told jurors, asserting Hersl’s 17-year career as a Baltimore officer was dominated by legitimate police work. He claims these thefts took place on a “few occasions,” asserting that federal prosecutors were essentially “overcharging” his client.

Purpura also attacked the credibility of the officers’ alleged victims, asserting they were drug dealers.

Taylor’s lawyer, Jennifer Wicks, told jurors that the witnesses the government will call during the trial have made “a career of lying” to investigators, juries and others. She called for jurors to examine their motivations and biases, particularly the indicted officers cooperating with the government.

“The evidence will show you couldn’t believe them before, and you can’t believe them now,” Hinds said, arguing that she believes jurors should find Taylor not guilty of all charges against him.

But Wise said the government will show a clear pattern of corruption that lasted years, even before the indicted officers were assigned to the elite gun recovery unit.

“It was a unit made up of detectives who had already gone rogue,” Wise said.

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HEADLINE	01/23 Pakistan: suspect serial killer arrested
SOURCE	http://time.com/5115502/zainab-amin-murder-arrest/?xid=homepage
GIST	<p>A suspected serial killer has been arrested following the rape and murder of 7-year-old Zainab Amin, whose body was found in a trash heap in Kasur, Pakistan, earlier this month.</p> <p>A 24-year-old man named only as Imran was arrested for the girl’s murder after he confessed and his DNA was found at the crime scene, Chief Minister of Punjab Shehbaz Sharif said during a press conference and on Twitter Tuesday, calling the man a “serial killer.” Police had said they believed Zainab had been raped and strangled to death.</p> <p>Kasur police said they have seen 12 recorded murders in two years that were similar to Zainab’s, and previously said that five of those cases could be linked to the same person. The suspect is now accused to seven other attacks, CNN reported.</p> <p>Zainab’s rape and murder led to deadly protests and garnered worldwide attention after her body was found days after being reported missing.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Pierce Co: 4th suspect in deputy killing
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SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/878137/another-suspect-arrested-in-shooting-death-of-pierce-county-deputy/
GIST	<p>Police have arrested another suspect in the shooting death of Pierce County Deputy Daniel McCartney.</p> <p>A 29-year-old woman was arrested at a house in Roy and booked into Pierce County jail on Tuesday. Law enforcement believes she helped plan the robbery and was in the getaway car during the shooting, The Tacoma News Tribune reported. The woman has been charged with first-degree murder and first-degree kidnapping.</p> <p>Deputy McCartney was shot and killed earlier this month while responding to a home burglary in Frederickson.</p> <p>Two other suspects, 32-year-old Frank Pawul and 52-year-old Brenda Troyer, were arrested and charged with murder within days of the shooting. A third suspect, Henry Carden, was found dead at the scene.</p> <p>The Pierce County Prosecutor's Office alleges that Pawul and Henry Carden were driven to the Frederickson house in a getaway car. Three adults and two children were in the home. Pawul and Carden broke into the home and demanded money. They were wearing masks and holding handguns. They also had "bowie" style knives.</p> <p>The residents were taken at gunpoint into the home's master bedroom, according to police. One resident escaped through a window and called 911 at 11:24 p.m. Six minutes later, Deputy Daniel McCartney arrived on the scene. He notified dispatch that he was pursuing the two male suspects on foot. Shortly thereafter, he reported "shots fired."</p> <p>When backup arrived on the scene, Deputy McCartney had been shot. Carden was found dead, having been shot several times. Carden, however, was wearing body armor and was killed by a self-inflicted gun wound to the head.</p> <p>Pawul initially escaped but was taken into custody the next morning. Brenda Troyer was also arrested a day later.</p> <p>McCartney, a Navy veteran, was a father of three.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Teekah Lewis vigil: 19yrs missing
SOURCE	http://komonews.com/news/local/mother-hosts-vigil-marking-19-years-since-disappearance-of-teekah-lewis
GIST	<p>TACOMA, Wash. - The crime scene in Tacoma where Teekah Lewis vanished 19 years ago became a gathering spot Tuesday night to pray, hope and remember.</p> <p>Each year the missing girl's mother has held a vigil, and even with the passage of time, Theresa Lewis says it's still gut-wrenching to come back. However, Lewis said she won't give up on her daughter, even though every lead in this case has gone cold.</p> <p>"I wish that we could have got her picture out there right away when it first happened," Lewis said.</p> <p>The mother wishes a lot of things were different about the day her daughter disappeared. Now she focuses on what she can do today to bring Teekah back home, or at least learn the truth about what happened.</p> <p>Dozens joined Lewis to mark the day 19 years ago when her toddler went missing while the family was at a Tacoma bowling alley. Police believe Teekah was kidnapped, but the case has gone unsolved.</p>

	“If we have to come out here every year, I'll be right here,” Lewis said. “Because somebody knows something.”
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HEADLINE	01/23 FBI: violent crime down; murder rate up
SOURCE	https://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2018/01/23/FBI-Violent-crime-down-during-first-half-of-2017-murder-rate-up/3901516755504/?utm_source=fp&utm_campaign=lh&utm_medium=3
GIST	<p>Jan. 23 (UPI) -- The overall violent crime rate fell during the first half of 2017 but murders increased during that period, according to the semiannual FBI crime statistics released Tuesday.</p> <p>Compared to the first half of 2016, the number of violent crimes decreased by 0.8 percent between January and June in 2017. That includes a 2.4 percent decrease in rape, 6.1 percent decrease in burglary and a 0.1 percent decrease in aggravated assault.</p> <p>But the murder rate increased by 1.5 percent.</p> <p>Although murders increased, Attorney General Jeff Sessions pointed out in an op-ed in USA Today that the murder rate slowed down compared to 2016 when there was a 5.2 percent increase from the previous year.</p> <p>"In the first six months of last year, the increase in the murder rate slowed and violent crime actually went down," Sessions said Tuesday. "Publicly available data for the rest of the year suggest further progress. For the first time in the past few years, the American people can have hope for a safer future."</p> <p>Sessions credited President Donald Trump for prioritizing the reduction of violent crime, but did not address the murder rate increase.</p> <p>"Trump ran for office on a message of law and order, and he won," Sessions said. "When he took office, he ordered the Department of Justice to stop and reverse these trends -- and that is what we have been doing every day for the past year."</p> <p>Although violent crime has increased since 2014, according to FBI and Bureau of Justice Statistics, the violent crime rate has steadily trended downward for decades, including a 50 percent decrease between 1993 and 2015.</p> <p>However, the murder rate has risen in recent years, including a 10 percent spike between 2014 and 2015.</p> <p>But while some cities like Chicago, Baltimore and Louisville, Ky. have seen higher rates of murder, other cities like New York are at historic lows.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Rights group: slavery Thai fishing fleets
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2018/01/23/asia/hrw-thailand-fishing-reform-report/index.html
GIST	<p>Bangkok, Thailand (CNN)Reforms to address modern-day slavery in Thailand's fishing fleets haven't stamped out coercive labor practices in the industry, a leading human rights group says.</p> <p>The report, "Hidden Chains: Forced Labor and Rights Abuses in Thailand's Fishing Industry," authored by Human Rights Watch (HRW) was released at a briefing at the European Parliament Tuesday.</p> <p>It asserts that, despite the Thai government's pronouncements to rein in human rights abuses on board Thai fishing boats, they remain widespread.</p>

	<p>"Consumers in Europe, the US, and Japan should be confident that their seafood from Thailand didn't involve trafficked or forced labor," said Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch.</p> <p>"Yet, despite high profile commitments by the Thai government to clean up the fishing industry, problems are rampant."</p> <p>While the report notes that both the EU and the US have taken steps to punish the Thai government for abusive practices, Adams urged Western governments to pile pressure on Thailand to ensure that reforms are not merely window-dressing.</p> <p>Mongkol Sukchararoenkana, a representative of Thailand's National Fisheries Association, told Human Rights Watch that the industry had used illegal labor "in the past" but no longer did.</p> <p>"But now things have changed completely. There is no exploitation like in the past. The consumers of the USA and Europe can eat our seafood. Everything is fine. Every problem has been fixed by the current government. The boats are correct and the workers are correct. There is no more forced labor."</p> <p>Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs called the allegations "sweeping and ungrounded."</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Arrest in Everett apartment bldg. arson
SOURCE	http://www.kiro7.com/news/north-sound-news/man-arrested-in-arson-at-everett-apartment-complex/688242909
GIST	<p>EVERETT, Wash. - A man has been arrested in an arson at an Everett apartment building that injured one woman and may have led to the death of a second woman.</p> <p>Firefighters battled the three-alarm fire at 2229 Colby Avenue on Dec. 21.</p> <p>One woman was hurt when she jumped from a second-floor balcony to escape.</p> <p>A 76-year-old woman, who was hospitalized for smoke inhalation, later died. Before her death, her family said she was unresponsive and on a breathing machine. The cause and manner of her death are still under investigation.</p> <p>After 3-alarm fire in Everett, questions about needing more firefighters</p> <p>Everett police detectives later determined that a man started a fire in the only stairwell that connected the first and second floors.</p> <p>A tip led detectives to Bellingham, where a 40-year-old man was questioned and confessed to starting the fire, according to Everett detectives.</p> <p>The man was booked into the Snohomish County Jail on arson and assault charges.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Agency: 6,475 cited for distracted driving
SOURCE	http://www.king5.com/article/news/local/over-6000-drivers-cited-in-first-6-months-of-distracted-driving-law/281-510842621
GIST	<p>In the first six months of Washington state's distracted driving law, state patrol officers have issued 6,475 distracted driving citations statewide, according to data released Tuesday by the Washington Traffic Safety Commission.</p>

	<p>The law went into effect on July 23.</p> <p>“When you drive distracted, you are putting both yourself and other drivers in danger,” Washington State Patrol Chief John R. Batiste said in a statement.</p> <p>The grace period for the new law ended at the beginning of January, and law enforcement began ticketing drivers who were caught texting, talking on the phone, or holding hand-held electronic devices at the wheel.</p> <p>A first offense costs a driver \$136. Second offenses are \$234.</p> <p>Eating, drinking, and smoking are considered secondary offenses.</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 ‘Acid attack’ during bank robbery
SOURCE	https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/676348/brighthouse-bank-robbery-acid-attack-on-guard-in-brigate-yorkshire
GIST	<p>It is believed a G4S guard had an "ammonia-type substance" sprayed in his face when he entered Barclays Bank in Brighthouse, West Yorkshire.</p> <p>The thieves grabbed the cash box he was holding and ran off.</p> <p>The guard was rushed to hospital after the attack.</p> <p>Area Risk Consultant for G4S Cash Solutions, Duncan Watson, said: "One of our cash crews was the victim of a violent attack during a routine service on Briggate, Brighthouse.</p> <p>"Our employee has suffered serious facial injuries and is currently receiving treatment in hospital. He has understandably been left very shaken by this vicious attack.</p> <p>"We are working closely with West Yorkshire Police and I would urge anyone who may have been nearby and seen this attack to get in touch with the police or dial 101 so that those behind this attack can be brought to justice."</p>
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HEADLINE	01/23 Kentucky school shooting: 2 killed
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2018/01/23/us/kentucky-high-school-shooting/index.html
GIST	<p>(CNN)Another high school has turned into a scene of carnage, this time in western Kentucky.</p> <p>Fourteen people were wounded, two of them fatally, after a shooter opened fire Tuesday morning at Marshall County High School, Gov. Matt Bevin said at a news conference. Another five people sustained other injuries.</p> <p>A 15-year-old male student was arrested at the scene and will be charged with murder and attempted murder, Bevin said.</p> <p>The slain victims were a boy and a girl, both 15 years old. The girl died at the scene and the boy died at a hospital, State Police Commissioner Richard W. Sanders said. The conditions of the injured students were not immediately known.</p> <p>Sanders said the suspect, armed with a handgun, walked into the school at 8:57 a.m. ET and started shooting.</p>

	The violence in Marshall County, a rural area near the western tip of Kentucky, stunned the governor. Authorities have not provided a possible motive.
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