



	International	National	Regional and Local
Events, Opportunities Go to articles	02/02 NKorea: US threatens Korea's relations 02/02 Shanghai: van plows into crowd; 18 hurt 02/02 UN: migrants feared drowned off Libya 02/02 Turmoil in the Maldives 02/01 Doping ban 28 Russia athletes overturned 02/01 Russia warns: US 'hunting' for Russians 02/01 Germany limits migrant family reunions 02/01 Cape Town cuts water rations 45%	02/02 ICE raids hit northern Calif. businesses 02/02 Judge blocks Indonesians deportation 02/02 SoCal brief escape from drought ends 02/01 L.A. homelessness surges 75% in 6 years 02/01 NTSB: 'issues' reported at grade crossing 02/01 Army blames recent deaths on vaping oils 02/01 Official: Navy suffers budget uncertainty 02/01 Flu onslaught: ERs into waiting rooms 02/01 Federal officials blame Puerto Rico 02/01 Hawaii 'button pusher' to sue state 02/01 Bitter cold, snow for eastern US 02/01 'Super sick Monday'?	02/01 Ex-Mayor Murray \$116K/yr pension for life 02/01 Seattle removes surveillance cameras 02/01 Rattlesnake Ridge evacuation lifted 02/01 Auburn officials to Winter Olympics 02/01 Tacoma Fire hands out Narcan kits 02/01 Claim: real costs to live in Seattle 02/01 SEA: renovations, record growth 02/01 Spring arrive early in Wash.?
Cyber Awareness Go to articles	02/02 Bitcoin continues downward trend 02/02 New Monero mining malware infects PCs 02/01 Hackers already targeted Winter Olympics 02/01 Massive wave of attacks on Dutch banks 02/01 Cryptomining attacks rise as big threats 02/01 Scarabey ransomware w/new tactics 02/01 JenX botnet targets IoT devices	02/02 Study: more ICS accessible via web 02/01 Apple removes Telegram app from store 02/01 Court: can't sue Twitter for terror support 02/01 US CERT guidelines for Olympic visitors 02/01 Cybercriminals target cryptocurrencies 02/01 HHS issues cyber extortion newsletter 02/01 Hackers scam BeeToken users of \$1M 02/01 Hostile states using proxy hackers 02/01 Stolen adult site login credentials 02/01 FBI warns of fake FBI IC3 email	
Terror Conditions Go to articles	02/02 Turkey: rocket attacks from Syria enclave 02/01 Turkey-backed forces push into enclave 02/01 London: van driver convicted for attack 02/01 Groups: ancient Syria temple bombed 02/01 Turkey bombs families into caves 02/01 Wave of attacks rock Afghanistan 02/01 Slow death of al-Qaeda in Algeria	02/01 Airstrikes in Yemen dramatically jump 02/01 Afghan official: US drone kills 26 Taliban	02/01 Guilty plea in false terror threats
Suspicious, Unusual Go to articles	02/02 New Zealand: January hottest ever 02/01 Cuba: Fidel Castro son kills self 02/01 US: Syria developing chem. weapons 02/01 Australian government secrets revealed 02/01 Baby milk contamination 'began in 2005'	02/01 Small town awash w/prescription pills 02/01 United tightens support animal rules 02/01 Filmmaker: D.B. Cooper case solved	02/01 Jail inmate death under investigation 02/01 Mystery: 1lb. meth delivered to doorstep
Crime, Criminals Go to articles	02/02 France: police reinforcements to Calais 02/01 Migrant melee in Calais; 4 shot	02/02 Robert Wagner 'person of interest' 02/02 Fake Super Bowl merchandise seized 02/02 Judge tosses Fla. ex-felons voting ban 02/01 Louisville officer shot during traffic stop 02/01 'Slender man' teen 40yrs institution care 02/01 US school shootings w/female shooters 02/01 Police: L.A. school shooting 'accident' 02/01 L.A. school shooting: 12yr-old suspect 02/01 Jan. smuggling busts find 200 illegals 02/01 Puerto Rico: 78 killings in January 01/31 NY prison inmates to get tablets	02/01 Sex ring moved hundreds women 02/01 Seattle: man stabbed on metro bus 02/01 Men indicted gun smuggling for Kurds 02/01 Smash-grab robbery suspects charged 02/01 NAACP official charged w/attempted theft

[DISCLAIMER and FAIR USE Notice](#)

Event Calendar

[Top of page](#)

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

Events, Opportunities

[Top of page](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Hawaii 'button pusher' to sue state
SOURCE	http://khon2.com/2018/02/01/emergency-worker-behind-false-missile-alert-to-file-lawsuit-against-the-state/
GIST	<p>The emergency worker fired by the state for sending a false missile alert has hired an attorney, and plans to sue the state for defamation.</p> <p>The state has not identified the worker, but his attorney, Michael Green, says many people already know who he is, because the worker has received numerous death threats.</p> <p>So what does it take to prove that the state is liable?</p> <p>Green says his client has been made a scapegoat in all this. The worker has been living in fear because of the death threats, and Green says it's because the state lied about what happened.</p> <p>Once the panic died down on Jan. 13, state officials, including the governor, announced that the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency worker who issued the missile alert had mistakenly pressed the wrong button.</p> <p>On Tuesday, Jan. 30, the FCC and the state added that the worker didn't know it was a drill, and actually thought there was a missile attack.</p> <p>"He never pressed the wrong button. He pressed the button he wanted to press, because the way it came out, he thinks we're in imminent danger. Within 20 minutes, we might not be here anymore," Green said.</p> <p>The state has not released the workers name, but says it plans to.</p> <p>"People want to kill him. They identified him as a male, 10 years in the office. They show the back of a man sitting on a desk. It's not rocket science to figure out who it is," Green said.</p> <p>KHON2 reached out to David Major, a constitutional law attorney for the firm Bays Lung Rose Holma, who also handles defamation lawsuits. He says the state has a wide range of immunity against defamation lawsuits.</p> <p>"It provides for protections for the state, because if every time somebody disagreed with what the state said, they could sue them, it would lead to a huge problem in the court system," Major said.</p> <p>Major says the worker would have to prove that what the state said about him and the incident was false.</p> <p>Green says he might also sue the state for slander and libel.</p> <p>"Because they're saying that he made a mistake?" KHON2 asked.</p> <p>"No, because they lied about what happened. It's got to be untrue what they said about him. It's got to be false," Green said.</p> <p>It's not clear yet if the worker wants his job back.</p> <p>We reached out to the state, and a spokesman says it does not comment on pending litigation.</p>
Return to	

HEADLINE	02/01 Russia warns: US 'hunting' for Russians
SOURCE	https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-usa-travel-extradition/russia-says-u-s-hunting-for-russians-to-arrest-around-the-world-idUSKBN1FM0J2
GIST	<p>MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russia has issued a travel warning recommending its citizens think twice before traveling abroad, saying the United States was hunting for Russians to arrest around the world.</p> <p>The Foreign Ministry statement warns Russian citizens that when abroad they face a serious threat of arrest by other countries at Washington's request, after which they could be extradited to the United States.</p> <p>"Despite our calls to improve cooperation between the relevant U.S. and Russian authorities ... U.S. special services have effectively continued "hunting" for Russians around the world," the travel warning said.</p> <p>"Considering these circumstances, we strongly insist that Russian citizens carefully weigh up all the risks when planning trips abroad," the Foreign Ministry said.</p> <p>It said more than 10 Russians had been detained in foreign countries with U.S. involvement since the start of 2017.</p> <p>By way of example, it pointed to at least four Russians arrested on U.S. cyber crime charges in Spain, Latvia and Greece. U.S. action against suspected Russian cyber criminals surged to a record high last year.</p> <p>Seven Russians were arrested or indicted in 2017 in the United States and abroad, compared to an average of two a year in the preceding six years.</p> <p>The ministry pointed to the case of Stanislav Lisov, accused of creating a computer virus that targeted customers of financial institutions, causing millions of dollars of damage, who was extradited from Spain to the United States last year.</p> <p>It mentioned earlier cases as well, including the detention of Roman Seleznev for cyber crime in the Maldives in 2014, which it described as a kidnapping by American agents.</p> <p>The statement, published on Thursday, also warns Russian citizens that upon extradition they will face biased treatment at the hands of the U.S. justice system.</p> <p>The U.S. State Department declined to comment.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/02 SoCal brief escape from drought ends
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/982a4445806649a7a24f44b96442fa1a/Southern-California's-brief-escape-from-drought-ends
GIST	<p>PHILLIPS STATION, Calif. (AP) — California's brief escape from severe drought ended Thursday after scientists declared more than 40 percent of the state in moderate drought and water officials confirmed lower-than-normal snowpack in the Sierra Nevada.</p> <p>Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, which hold nearly a quarter of the state's population, were rated in severe drought.</p> <p>During a week of rainless skies and some record-high temperatures in Southern California, water officials also trekked into the Sierra Nevada on Thursday and manually measured the vital snowpack, which stood</p>

at less than a third of normal for the date.

“It’s not nearly where we’d like to be,” Frank Gehrke, a state official, said of the snow, which supplies water to millions of Californians in a good, wet year.

Los Angeles and some surrounding areas have received only one significant rainstorm in nearly a year.

In Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, which are about 100 miles (160 kilometers) north of Los Angeles, the lack of rain and dry vegetation fueled a December wildfire that grew to be the largest recorded in state history. When it finally rained, the storm triggered mudslides that killed at least 21.

For people who survived the mudslides, looking out at clear and sunny skies again Thursday was a relief despite the deepening drought.

“I know we need rain, but another mudslide would be awful,” said Santa Barbara restaurant hostess Cayla Stretz.

Survivors in her area are still digging out homes, many beaches and roads are closed by mud, and business is down in the beach town, Stretz said.

It took a near-record rainy winter in Northern California last year to snap the near-record five-year dry spell.

Last year’s rain has most of the state’s reservoirs higher than usual, a bright spot, said Doug Carlson, a state Department of Water Resources spokesman. Two months remain in the state’s peak rain and snow season, leaving room for hope, Carlson said.

Gov. Jerry Brown lifted California’s drought state of emergency in April, but it took until September for the last bit of the state to emerge from the severe category of that drought — until now.

Only 13 percent of the state was considered in drought last week, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor, which is a project of several government agencies and their partners.

During the peak of the state’s dry spell, 99.9 percent of California was in some stage of drought and nearly half fell into the very highest category.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/02 NKorea: US threatens inter-Korea relations
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/7ed9e1028a4f40abb42b52b60f4f86c8/North-Korea-says-US-actions-threaten-inter-Korean-relations
GIST	<p>UNITED NATIONS (AP) — North Korea’s foreign minister is warning the United States that its deployment of nuclear-powered aircraft carriers and planned military exercises immediately after the Winter Olympics threaten improved relations between the two Koreas.</p> <p>Ri Yong Ho urged the United Nations not to remain silent about what he called “the U.S. dangerous game of aggravating (the) situation in and around the Korean peninsula and driving the whole world into a possible disaster of nuclear war.”</p> <p>In a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres circulated late Thursday, he urged the U.N. chief to exert efforts to halt the U.S. deployment of equipment and the upcoming military maneuvers.</p> <p>Ri warned that the U.S. military actions are aimed “to provoke a nuclear war, which will undermine the improvement of inter-Korean relations and the easing of tensions.”</p>

The North Korean minister also accused U.S. authorities of “misleading public opinion” to believe the new inter-Korean dialogue is the result of “their harshest sanctions and pressure imposed on our country.”

Rather, Ri said, the “dramatic turning point” for peace and stability on the Korean peninsula “where a touch-and-go war danger was prevailing is entirely thanks to the noble love for the nation by the respected comrade Kim Jong Un,” North Korea’s leader.

Kim unexpectedly said in his New Year’s address that he was willing to send a delegation to the Winter Olympics being held Feb. 9-25 in the South Korean county of Pyeongchang — and the South Korean government and International Olympic Committee responded positively.

As part of the rapprochement with Seoul, hundreds of North Korean officials, athletes, artists, journalists and a 230-member cheering group will be attending the Olympics, and athletes from the two Koreas will march together under a single flag during the opening ceremony.

Ri asked the U.N. Security Council in the letter to take up “the issue of welcoming the process of improved inter-Korean relations and discouraging the neighboring countries from disturbing the process.”

The efforts at reconciliation follow a year of heightened animosities over North Korea’s increasingly sophisticated nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, which Pyongyang says can now reach the U.S. mainland. There has been escalating rhetoric between Kim and U.S. President Donald Trump, including back-and-forth over their “nuclear button.”

Some experts say North Korea may want to use improved ties with the South as a way to weaken U.S.-led international sanctions. Liberal South Korean President Moon Jae-in sees the Olympics as an opportunity to resume meaningful contact with North Korea following the extended period of tension and a diplomatic stalemate over the North’s nuclear and missile programs.

Ri charged in the letter that the U.S. military is “intentionally” aggravating the situation in and around the Korean peninsula by deploying military reinforcements, including aircraft carrier strike groups, designed to make a “pre-emptive strike” on North Korea at a time when the two Koreas “are charting a course of peace together.”

“This is a primary factor which would block the inter-Korean reconciliation process and drive the situation of the Korean peninsula into an unpredictable dangerous phase,” Ri warned.

[Return to Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/02 Judge blocks Indonesians deportation
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/80731c8249dc4f7284045e4d7999301e/Judge-grants-Christian-Indonesians-time-to-fight-deportation
GIST	<p>BOSTON (AP) — A federal judge on Thursday blocked the government from deporting dozens of Christian Indonesians who fear persecution if returned home, until they’re given a chance to fight their removal.</p> <p>U.S. District Judge Patti Saris in Boston said 50 Indonesians living illegally in New Hampshire must be given time to reopen their immigration cases and argue that the conditions in their home country have changed.</p> <p>“This opinion may literally save lives,” said Lee Gelernt, an attorney for the Indonesians. “As the court recognized ... this country’s laws do not permit the government to send people back to persecution or torture,” said Gelernt, of the American Civil Liberties Union’s Immigrants’ Rights Project.</p> <p>The government had urged the judge to deny their bid for a preliminary injunction blocking their removal. The government argued that the court doesn’t have jurisdiction over the matter and that the Indonesians</p>

	<p>failed to show that they would suffer irreparable harm if they aren't granted a reprieve.</p> <p>A U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement official didn't immediately respond to an email seeking comment on Thursday.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Doping ban 28 Russia athletes overturned
SOURCE	https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2018-02-01/olympic-doping-ban-overturned-for-28-russian-athletes
GIST	<p>The doping bans on 28 Russian Olympic athletes were overturned Thursday by the Swiss-based Court of Arbitration for Sport just a week before the start of the 2018 Winter Games in South Korea.</p> <p>Following an investigation into the Russian doping scandal during the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, the International Olympic Committee handed down lifetime bans on 43 Russian athletes and banned the entire Russian team from the 2018 games. All but one athlete filed an appeal with CAS.</p> <p>The court upheld the appeals of 28 athletes accused of doping, citing insufficient evidence. The ruling means the athletes' results will be reinstated and they may seek to compete in this year's games in Pyeongchang, South Korea — though it was not made immediately clear if they would.</p> <p>"In 28 cases, the evidence collected was found to be insufficient to establish that an anti-doping rule violation (ADRV) was committed by the athletes concerned," the ruling stated.</p> <p>In 11 more cases, appeals were partially upheld. The court ruled evidence was sufficient enough to prove doping took place and rules were violated, but lifetime bans were not appropriate punishments. Instead, those athletes will be barred from competing in PyeongChang, but the lifetime ban will be lifted.</p> <p>The remaining three cases have been postponed.</p> <p>The IOC said the decision "may have a serious impact on the future fight against doping," CNN reported. It also said it could appeal the decision in the Swiss Federal Tribunal, the country's highest court.</p> <p>Currently, Russia has 169 athletes competing in South Korea as neutrals. In order for the 28 athletes to participate they would need to be selected to join the Russian team and be cleared by the IOC Invitation Review Panel.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Official: Navy suffers budget uncertainty
SOURCE	https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2018/feb/1/navy-ops-suffering-toxic-effect-budget-uncertainty/
GIST	<p>The congressional stalemate over defense budgets is having a "toxic effect" on Navy operations, which are progressing at a speed and pace not seen since the peak of the Cold War, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John M. Richardson warned Thursday.</p> <p>The lack of funding certainty is preventing the Navy from keeping its fleet in good order, the Navy chief added, saying the shortfalls were in part to blame for the service's deadly 2017 summer in which 20 sailors died in sea accidents. Top Navy officials faced sharp criticism on Capitol Hill over the state of the service.</p> <p>To date, two American carrier strike groups, two amphibious ready groups and a total of six cruisers and destroyers armed with ballistic missile defense systems are steaming across international waterways, the admiral said in a speech at the Washington-based Heritage Foundation.</p>

Submarine operations are also experiencing an significant uptick with 14 subs currently at sea, which “is a bit of a high point” for the underwater fleet, Adm. Richardson said. That deployment rate, coupled with the surface warships also at sea, represents nearly a third of its roughly 300-vessel fleet forward deployed throughout the waterways and sea lanes that crisscross the globe.

But problems arise when there isn’t the money for up-to-date equipment and maintenance.

“As we increase capacity, as we increase capability, the readiness has to be there,” he said Thursday, noting that “ship maintenance has taken one of the biggest hits” under current budget environment.

“It really starts to have a toxic effect. ... A ship that cannot go out because it is not maintained is a ship that does not project naval power,” he added.

The high operational tempo for the Navy, not seen since the dying days of the Cold War, comes as the clock winds down on yet another short-term, stopgap defense budget, passed by Congress to end last month’s three-day government shutdown.

The continuing resolution to finance defense spending and other segments of the federal government is set to expire on Feb. 8.

“I trust Congress will do their job and write the check. ... Continuing resolutions are no way to run a military,” told reporters Thursday on the looming deadline.

Adm. Richardson said the uncertainty over whether and when the money will be available poses special problems for the Navy.

“You cannot write the [maintenance] contract if you do not have the funding,” he said. With less ships ready to embark out on operations, the Navy’s comparatively small fleet is grappling to keep place with the demands of “a very dynamic and changing maritime environment.”

The Navy is not the only branch of the military complaining that its missions are being hindered by political infighting in Washington.

“Continuing resolutions are no way to run the military. It’s a lot of uncertainty, it’s wasteful, three weeks at a time, a month at a time, six weeks at a time. It’s wasteful,” Defense Department spokeswoman Dana White told reporters at the Pentagon on Thursday.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Rattlesnake Ridge evacuation lifted
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/888027/evacuation-ends-for-residents-near-rattlesnake-ridge-slide/
GIST	<p>YAKIMA, Wash. (AP) — A month-long evacuation prompted by a slow-moving landslide on Rattlesnake Ridge has been lifted.</p> <p>KOMO-TV reports dozens of families received notice on Thursday that they could head home.</p> <p>Residents had been evacuated in early January when concerns grew about the landslide. At that time, geologists felt a sudden failure of the land might send rocks tumbling onto Interstate 82 or the small group of houses below the ridge.</p> <p>But this week, a new third-party report indicates the landslide may slowly “creep” along for years — the way it currently is. It’s moving about 3 inches (7.6 centimeters) per day.</p> <p>The Department of Natural Resources says it will continue to use data-gathering equipment to monitor the landslide.</p>

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Seattle removes surveillance cameras
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/887570/150k-remove-seattle-surveillance-cameras/
GIST	<p>They never got their shot at taking shots around Seattle, but these surveillance cameras are coming down anyway and it will cost the city.</p> <p>“We’ve budgeted \$150,000 for this project,” said Megan Erb with Seattle’s IT department. “Each removal is different depending on how the equipment was installed; some will be easier to remove than others, thus making them less expensive than the ones that are a little more complicated to remove.”</p> <p>Erb said that the total cost of the camera removal throughout Seattle — 28 in all — won’t be known until the job is done.</p> <p>The West Seattle Blog reports that the Seattle Police Department installed the surveillance cameras in 2013 with a grant from the Homeland Security Department. But after the community objected, they were never used. They were installed during the Mayor Mike McGinn era, and sat idle during the Ed Murray era. Crews began taking them down over this past week.</p> <p>The Blog explains that the cameras were proposed for port security, but ended up being placed in public parks and residential areas, too.</p> <p>Bellevue-based Prime Electric has been contracted to remove the cameras. The ones in West Seattle have been taken down already. Other surveillance cameras in Magnolia and Golden Gardens are also being taken down. There are more than a dozen in the downtown area also slated for removal.</p> <p>The security cameras are expected to be turned over to SDOT to be used for traffic monitoring.</p>
Return to	
Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 L.A. homelessness surges 75% in 6yrs
SOURCE	http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-homeless-how-we-got-here-20180201-story.html
GIST	<p>Some of the poorest people in the city spend their days in the shadow of Los Angeles City Hall, napping on flattened cardboard boxes.</p> <p>On any given day, as many as 20 people take to the City Hall lawn, across the street from LAPD headquarters. They're there to "escape the madness" in downtown streets, a 53-year-old homeless man named Lazarus said last week. At night, they fan out to doorways or deserted plazas to wait for daybreak.</p> <p>The growth of a homeless day camp at the halls of civic power speaks to the breadth of Los Angeles' burgeoning homelessness problem.</p> <p>The number of those living in the streets and shelters of the city of L.A. and most of the county surged 75% — to roughly 55,000 from about 32,000 — in the last six years. (Including Glendale, Pasadena and Long Beach, which conduct their own homeless counts, the total is nearly 58,000.)</p> <p>Three out of four homeless people — 41,000 — live in cars, campers, tents and lean-tos, by far the biggest single group of unsheltered people in any U.S. city. If you took out Los Angeles, national homelessness would have dropped last year for the first time since the recession.</p> <p>People left behind by the economic recovery can't compete with young professionals who have bid rents up to record levels.</p>

In another era, they might have found refuge in crumbling hotels and tenements. But many of those buildings were lost in the city's post-recession spree of building, evictions and renovations.

The problem has only gotten worse since Mayor Eric Garcetti took office in 2013 and a liberal Democratic supermajority emerged in 2016 on the county Board of Supervisors.

Tent cities stretch from the Antelope Valley desert to the Santa Monica coast, with stopovers in unlikely communities — even Bel-Air, where a homeless cooking fire was implicated in December's Skirball fire.

During an October hygiene survey, county public health officials identified 222 encampments, including 50 with 30 or more people living in them. These ragtag outposts have altered the basic terms of urban life.

People in Koreatown step outside their fancy condos to find tents, rotting food and human feces at their doorsteps. Buses and trains have become de facto shelters, and thousands of people sleep in fear and degradation.

Officials and philanthropic groups have been housing more homeless people than ever before — 26,000 between 2014 and 2017. But L.A. has a severe housing shortage, and city and county homeless programs have been slow to start and too limited to absorb the waves of people forced into the streets.

Officials are hoping reinforcements will breathe new life into the effort to end homelessness. Over the last 16 months, voters have agreed to tax themselves \$4.6 billion to build housing — 10,000 units in 10 years — and provide supportive services for homeless people. A long-delayed developer fee that's expected to pump out \$100 million for affordable housing was finally adopted, although some observers wonder whether it comes too late to capitalize on the building boom.

The county money started flowing in October; officials have quadrupled homeless outreach teams, added 600 shelter beds, expanded winter shelter hours and ramped up hotel vouchers. Some 1,000 new employees are being hired at every level of homeless services, including support for people in the new housing projects.

But the crisis has been decades in the making. If homelessness continues to escalate at current rates, it will swamp even the best efforts.

"We are moving more homeless families and adults into housing," said Phil Ansell, director of the Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative. "What we have less control over is the inflow: people who simply are unable to pay the rent."

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Army blames recent deaths on vaping oils
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/army-2-deaths-60-hospitalizations-blamed-on-vaping-oils-health-alert/
GIST	<p>JACKSONVILLE, N.C. -- The U.S. Army is warning about the dangers of vaping synthetic cannabinoid oil after about 60 soldiers and Marines in North Carolina and 33 troops in Utah experienced serious medical problems in January. In a Monday public health alert, the U.S. Army Public Health Center said military personnel have suffered headaches, nausea, vomiting, palpitations, dilated pupils, dizziness, agitation and seizures.</p> <p>All the symptoms are associated with synthetic cannabinoids. Two Marines have died in accidents blamed on synthetic cannabinoid-induced seizures.</p> <p>"This problem has the potential to spread quickly across the Army," the alert said.</p> <p>Army regulations ban the use of so-called CBD oil or any products derived from marijuana, so some</p>

	<p>soldiers are using synthetic replacement oil.</p> <p>Public Health Center spokeswoman Chanel S. Weaver told The Fayetteville Observer that stopping this trend is a "top priority."</p> <p>"Consumers must be extremely vigilant if they are going to use vaping oils and should seek medical attention immediately if they feel they are having an adverse reaction to one of these products," Weaver said.</p> <p>Officials said most of the troops who were hospitalized troops were treated at the Naval Medical Center at Camp Lejeune, The Fayetteville Observer reported.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 Germany limits migrant family reunions
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/german-parliament-debates-migrant-family-reunification-issue-52760200?
GIST	<p>German lawmakers approved a measure Thursday extending rules limiting migrants' rights to bring close relatives to the country, paving the way for a new migrant plan this summer agreed to between Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative Union bloc and the center-left Social Democrats.</p> <p>The measure proposed by Merkel's conservatives passed 376 to 298, extends the current temporary ban on relatives joining migrants whose status in Germany is below full asylum. The ban will stay until new rules come into effect in August allowing 1,000 migrant relatives in per month.</p> <p>The suspension of family reunification rules for people with "subsidiary protection" was instituted in early 2016, after Germany was overwhelmed with the arrival of 890,000 asylum-seekers from the year before.</p> <p>The issue has been a major point of contention between Merkel's conservatives and the Social Democrats, but they were able to agree this week in coalition talks to form a new government. Under that plan, in addition to allowing in 1,000 relatives per month for migrants whose status is less than full asylum, they will also allow in additional people considered hardship cases.</p> <p>Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere had pushed for parliament to extend the suspension to pave the way for the new agreement, calling it a fair compromise.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 Bitter cold, snow for eastern US
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/US/bitter-cold-snow-forecast-entire-eastern-us-days/story?
GIST	<p>Two systems will be moving through the Northeast and Midwest over the next few days bringing light snow to most heavily populated areas, but bitter cold to the whole eastern United States.</p> <p>The first system already moved through the Midwest and the Great Lakes bringing a heavy burst of snow from Minneapolis to Green Bay, Wisconsin, and into Michigan overnight.</p> <p>Snow is flying this morning from Michigan to western Pennsylvania, New York and into New England.</p> <p>The storm system will make its way into the I-95 corridor from the Carolinas all the way into Maine on Thursday night into Friday morning.</p> <p>Because it is going to be a mild day today in the Northeast, the precipitation will begin as rain, then change to snow as the cold front moves through. Most areas will see minor snow accumulations, but there could be a few slick spots.</p>

	<p>After that, our attention turns to the next storm system coming out of the Pacific Northwest and crossing the country over the weekend.</p> <p>On Saturday, this storm system will move into the Midwest, bringing several inches of snow from the Dakotas into the Great Lakes, including the Twin Cities, Chicago, Indianapolis and Detroit.</p> <p>On Sunday evening, as the system moves east, it will pick up a southern component and bring rain and snow to the East Coast. The heaviest snow will be inland, away from the I-95 corridor.</p> <p>The snowfall totals for the Midwest and Northeast over the next several days shows the heaviest snow will be found near the Great Lakes and in the interior Northeast.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 Cape Town cuts water rations 45%
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/01/africa/cape-town-water-crisis-intl/index.html
GIST	<p>(CNN)Cape Town -- a city once at the forefront of Africa's green movement -- implemented new emergency water restrictions Thursday as the sprawling metropolis prepares for the day its taps run dry.</p> <p>Residents are now being asked to curb the amount of municipal water they use each day to just 50 liters (a little over 13 gallons). Only a month ago, level six restrictions had placed residents on a daily allowance of 87 liters (about 23 gallons), illustrating the severity of the looming crisis.</p> <p>Officials estimate that if water levels continue to fall as expected, South Africa's second most populous city will run out of water by April 16, which has been dubbed "Day Zero."</p> <p>Experts are keeping a close eye on daily consumption in a desperate bid to avoid the disaster, warning residents tempted to ignore measures that they face fines and the installation of water-management meters if they do not comply.</p> <p>It may seem unthinkable that a developed city of four million could run out of water but it's been a slow-burning catastrophe exacerbated by some uncontrollable factors.</p> <p>Cape Town been enduring the worst drought in a century for the past three years. A changing climate and rapidly growing population have made matters worse.</p> <p>And as the crisis has taken hold, Capetonians have not been doing enough to curb their water use, further aggravating the scarcity. Only an estimated 55% of the city's residents are actually sticking to their allotted water per day, according to last week's figures issued by authorities.</p> <p>"It is quite unbelievable that a majority of people do not seem to care and are sending all of us headlong towards Day Zero," the mayor's office said in January. "We can no longer ask people to stop wasting water. We must force them."</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 Flu onslaught: ERs into waiting rooms
SOURCE	https://www.wsj.com/articles/to-deal-with-a-flu-onslaught-emergency-rooms-expand-into-waiting-rooms-and-hallways-1517481000
GIST	<p>Emergency departments across the U.S. have been slammed in recent weeks by an onslaught of flu visits, forcing hospitals to devise new spaces to house patients, to restrict visitors and to postpone elective surgeries.</p>

Visits to hospital emergency departments, urgent care centers and other outpatient clinics by people with flu symptoms have been skyrocketing for several weeks. As of mid-January, such visits had surpassed every flu season except 2009-10, when a new flu strain caused a global pandemic. The dominant strain this season, H3N2, is particularly virulent, and the vaccine isn't very effective against it.

NYC Health & Hospitals has seen a 40% increase in the number of people being tested for the flu compared with this time last year, according to Sean Studer, deputy chief medical officer of the group, which runs New York City's public hospitals, clinics and long-term care facilities.

To cope with greater traffic to the emergency department, hospitals in the network are opening up so-called "flex" spaces that aren't usually needed for routine care. Patients coming to the hospital reporting flu symptoms are also placed in a separate waiting area and given masks to help prevent transmission, Dr. Studer said. If they need to be admitted, patients are given a room with a single bed when possible.

In Atlanta, the emergency department at Grady Memorial Hospital is caring for up to 25% more patients than it did at this time last year. The department usually sees around 400 patients a day, but there have been times this month when that number shot up to 502, according to Hany Atallah, Grady Memorial Hospital's chief of emergency medicine.

"Our emergency department is full, and our inpatient services are full," he said. "Overfull, actually."

But people are still coming, so the hospital has set up a temporary mobile medical unit on its premises for 30 days to deal with the overflow. Fully equipped with medical supplies and 14 beds, it is essentially a second emergency room, Dr. Atallah said. Staff began seeing patients in the mobile unit on Tuesday.

In addition to the mobile unit, Grady Memorial is using "family waiting rooms, holding areas and literally some hall spots" for patient beds, said Dr. Atallah.

Not everyone who comes to the emergency department needs to be admitted to the hospital, Dr. Atallah said. A patient who is young and otherwise healthy will likely be treated for fever, muscle aches and dehydration and then sent home to rest. Those most at risk for complications are the elderly, very young children, or people who have other health issues that the flu can exacerbate.

Given the severity of the flu this season and its potential complications, the hospital isn't allowing children 14 years old and younger to visit hospitalized patients. Children tend to harbor more infections, Dr. Atallah said, and they may not be as diligent about hand sanitization.

The University of Alabama at Birmingham Hospital, which sees an average of 250 to 300 patients each day, has experienced a jump in volume of about 10%, largely because of the flu outbreak. "We've not only seen an increase in volume, but an increase in acuity," said Sarah Nafziger, physician adviser for the Center for Patient Flow at UAB Hospital. "People are sicker than they were in previous years.

"It's not just people with flu symptoms, but people who have chronic medical conditions that are exacerbated by the flu," she added.

To deal with the higher number of emergency department visits, UAB is placing patients in areas that would normally be used for postoperative patients, such as anesthesia recovery rooms. The hospital has also delayed some elective surgeries that would require an overnight stay to open up more beds for admitted patients.

"As you can imagine, that's a costly decision for the hospital because elective surgeries and nonelective surgeries are the way hospitals increase their revenue," said Dr. Nafziger. "But sometimes you have to make those decisions to make sure you can safely care for patients."

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Auburn officials to Winter Olympics
SOURCE	http://www.king5.com/article/news/local/auburn-officials-head-to-pyeongchang-for-olympics/281-513763314
GIST	<p>The City of PyeongChang in South Korea invited the City of Auburn to the opening ceremony of this year's Winter Olympics.</p> <p>"To the best of my knowledge, we are the only one that has been invited," said Auburn Mayor Nancy Backus.</p> <p>Auburn and PyeongChang are sister cities, a global diplomacy network that aims to strengthen relationships between American and international cities.</p> <p>"The theme for the Winter Olympics is peace and I think it's the most appropriate theme right now because we can use a little peace in our world," said Backus. "The economic development and the trade, that's really the opportunity we see and the benefit that we've had. We've taken some of our local business owners on these trips, and they have benefitted. So there's importing and exporting going on, and it really has been beneficial to our city."</p> <p>In preparation for their trip, the City of Auburn is bringing a token of appreciation with them.</p> <p>"We've found this beautiful prism. We have the Winter Olympics on the inside, and on one side is the City of Auburn logo and the other side is a PyeongChang logo."</p> <p>"That's history in the making. And to know that I was there, to know that we'll have a delegation from Auburn that will be there. I'm very very proud," said Backus.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Spring arrive early in Washington?
SOURCE	http://www.king5.com/article/weather/blog/could-spring-arrive-early-in-washington/281-513626650
GIST	<p>Although we have La Niña conditions in the Pacific, our Northwest weather hasn't been behaving exactly the way we expect.</p> <p>Usually, La Niña winters increase the odds of below normal temperatures and above normal precipitation with lots of snow in the mountains during the period November into April.</p> <p>In the first 3 months of that period, Sea-Tac rainfall is above normal, as we would expect, but temperatures have been well above normal. In fact, in January the mean temperature at Sea-Tac was a significant 3 degrees above normal.</p> <p>However, the mountain snowpack that was lagging behind normal at the start of the January had a good month.</p> <p>All of the areas are slightly above normal with the exception of Mt. Baker which is much above normal. January was a great month for Baker. The ski area reported 225 inches of new snow in January – almost 19 feet! It's the most they have had in January in 20 years.</p> <p>Right now we are almost exactly in the middle of winter, so we may see some changes in these averages.</p> <p>However for the next week, it looks like it may feel as though spring has arrived. Over the weekend it will still be showery, but highs will push into the low to mid 50's when they would normally be in the upper 40's.</p> <p>We may turn dry and mild by the middle of next week. The latest two-week forecast from the Climate Prediction Center calls for above normal temperatures and below normal rainfall for February 7-14.</p>

	We won't hear officially from the Ground Hog until Friday, but right now it looks like it might be an early spring in Washington.
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Tacoma Fire hands out Narcan kits
SOURCE	http://q13fox.com/2018/02/01/tacoma-fire-hands-out-narcan-kits-to-opioid-addicts/
GIST	<p>TACOMA, Wash. – The opioid epidemic is hitting Washington state hard. These days, most of us know someone who’s been affected in some way, either as addicts themselves or the victim of crime related to addiction.</p> <p>Now, there are two local efforts to try and fight back. The Pierce County prosecutor is taking this battle to court to sue not one but three opioid makers, accusing them of being complicit in the crisis that’s killing hundreds of people in our state every year.</p> <p>Tacoma’s fire department is taking things a step further. It’s giving away free Narcan kits. It’s a drug that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. Since 2013, the Tacoma Fire Department has seen a 50% increase in having to use an opioid overdose antidote, Narcan. Now it’s working to put that life-saving drug into more hands.</p> <p>“What we’ve done in the past isn’t necessarily working today or in the future,” said Tacoma Fire Department Medical Services Officer Mike Newhouse.</p> <p>It’s a new action plan for Tacoma Fire first responders to tackle the growing opioid problem in the city. Instead of giving overdosing addicts a shot of Narcan and then sending them to the emergency department, paramedics will give addicts Narcan kits.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Claim: real costs to live in Seattle
SOURCE	http://www.seattlepi.com/seattlenews/article/2018-edition-What-does-it-really-cost-to-live-in-12540736.php
GIST	<p>It's been decades since Seattle could be considered a cheap place to live.</p> <p>And for much of its short life, it's been a boom town with ever-rising costs of living, albeit never more costly than they are today.</p> <p>In recent history, the city has seen only one significant decline in those costs -- during the Great Recession. Since then, everything from housing prices to the cost of a loaf of bread has been on the rise, the steep rise.</p> <p>This is how we arrive at the end of January 2018 to begin reckoning with a cost of living that is even less bearable than it was one foul year ago.</p> <p>In years past, this analysis started with the intent of comparing the cost of living in Seattle to its \$15-per-hour minimum wage. But each year, the numbers have demonstrated that living in Seattle (or, for that matter, much of the metro area) on \$15 an hour is a hell of a challenge.</p> <p>So, for the third annual installment, we'll set that aside and simply run the numbers.</p> <p>Let's start with the news that Seattle has risen to sixth place on the list of the most expensive places to live, according to figures from the Arlington, Virginia-based Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC).</p>

The Seattle metro area was given the composite index of 152.8 for the third quarter of 2017, meaning it's 52.8 percent more expensive to live here than the median cost of living in the U.S.

Certainly, we fared better than New York's Manhattan borough, with a score of 242.9, or San Francisco, with a score of 191.8.

Those numbers are helpful for tracking changes (Seattle, for instance, moved up two spots from its score of 147.5 in 2016) or for comparisons, but they don't actually reveal the true cost of living.

CREC's latest index did include costs for a number of items in the Seattle market, including grocery items, energy, doctors, dentists and more. But tallying those things is a bit clumsy, so we'll turn back to Numbeo.com to run some comparisons.

To start out, the cost of living estimator was set up this way: one person in the household who eats out at lunch or dinner 5 percent of the time and only at inexpensive restaurants, rarely drinks coffee away from home, rarely drinks alcohol, doesn't smoke, uses only public transit, doesn't own a car, never takes a vacation, doesn't belong to a gym or other sports club and rarely buys clothing.

This will be the bare bones, no-frills cost of living. We'll adjust later for a lifestyle that is more realistic.

The grand total monthly cost came to \$814.58. Now for the fun part: rent.

Rents (and real estate prices) in Seattle have been on an unstoppable upward trend since 2011. For December 2017, Zillow put the median one-bedroom apartment rent for the Seattle metro area at \$1,724. We chose a one-bedroom because the median rent for studios was actually higher.

Add that to the monthly costs calculated by Numbeo and we get \$2,539 per month, or \$30,463 per year. And of course, since that's what we'll need to spend, that's after taxes. The effective tax rate around that income level should wind up around 9.24 percent, so we'll need a gross annual salary of \$33,278 (if you worked full-time, that would be about \$15.90 per hour, in case you were wondering).

Keep in mind, that income assumes no debt, no medical expenses, no savings, only a tiny sliver for phone service, and about \$156 per year for clothing. And never mind the fact that our theoretical lifestyle won't include any kind of vacation or recreation that costs money.

Once more, these calculations reflect the fact that the poorest among us are forced to forego many of the things that make life in the Seattle area so wonderful. The amazing food, the hiking and camping, the fishing, boating and even regional trips are virtually nonexistent for our bare-bones resident.

Going back to the Numbeo calculator, we changed things to allow for a bit more eating and drinking out, some travel (one week per year), a gym membership and a car (with a \$142/month payment and only one tank of fuel each month).

We also made it a household of two people in the interest of sharing some of the burden.

With those changes in place, the monthly total, before rent, is \$2,457.92. Assuming our residents are still frugally minded, we'll let them share the one-bedroom apartment, bringing the total monthly cost to \$4,181.92, or \$50,183 per year.

Assuming a tax rate that ends up around 10 percent, those two will need to earn about \$55,201 a year before taxes.

Mind you, that's still \$27,600 each, but it certainly shows the value of teaming up to make that income stretch further.

	<p>If we kept the same standards but for just one person, they would need to earn about \$41,000 per year. Again, neither of these calculations allow for debt payments, medical bills or even insurance, or savings.</p> <p>The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) said last year that an income of \$50,400 per year or less in the Seattle area is considered low-income. Our frugal friends would be in the very low-income bracket for certain.</p> <p>Now, as readers will no doubt point out in emails and comments, people come up with creative ways to make a go of it in any city, regardless of how expensive it is. Seattle is no exception, but those creative opportunities are getting harder to find as the city continues to be transformed by a booming economy that doesn't benefit everyone equally.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/02 UN: migrants feared drowned off Libya
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/world/2018/02/02/latest-90-migrants-feared-drowned-off-libyan-coast.html
GIST	<p>PARIS – The Latest on Europe's migration crisis (all times local):</p> <p>11:15 a.m.</p> <p>The U.N.'s migration agency says its partner agencies are reporting that 90 people are feared drowned after a smuggler's boat carrying mostly Pakistani migrants has capsized off Libya's coast.</p> <p>International Organization for Migration spokeswoman Olivia Headon says 10 bodies have washed ashore near the Libyan town of Zuwara following the tragedy early Friday. Eight were believed to be Pakistani, and two Libyans.</p> <p>Headon, speaking by phone from Tunisia's capital to reporters at the U.N. in Geneva, said initial indications were that the boat became unbalanced.</p> <p>She said Pakistani nationals have been taking an increasing share among the number of migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean to Italy and Europe via Libya.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/02 ICE raids hit northern Calif. businesses
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/us/2018/02/02/ice-raid-hits-77-businesses-in-northern-california.html
GIST	<p>Less than a month after federal immigration officials raided nearly 100 7-Eleven stores nationwide, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents conducted another sweep this week in Northern California, officials said Thursday.</p> <p>This time, ICE agents searched 77 businesses in the San Francisco and Sacramento areas in what was believed to be the largest localized raid since President Donald Trump took office, the San Francisco Chronicle reported.</p> <p>The raid underscores ICE acting director Thomas Homan's call for a "400 percent increase" in agency operations focusing on workplaces, the paper reported.</p> <p>Unlike the 7-Eleven raids in January, which resulted in 21 arrests, ICE didn't identify the businesses hit this week, nor did the agency make any immediate arrests, the paper reported.</p> <p>However, federal immigration officials issued notices of inspection, and ordered the businesses to provide proof their employees are legally allowed to work in the U.S. -- giving them three days to comply, the paper reported.</p>

	<p>Democratic lawmakers and California Attorney General Xavier Becerra had been on edge since a report in the Chronicle last month that federal officials were planning such a raid.</p> <p>"We will, as always, work with our federal partners in every respect to go after drug dealers, human traffickers, potential terrorists," Becerra said in January. "We're not in the business of deportation. We're in the business of public safety."</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 'Super sick Monday'?
SOURCE	https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/02/01/why-14-million-people-planning-take-off-work-super-sick-monday/1088188001/
GIST	<p>If you don't plan on being at work Monday after the Super Bowl, you might want to think of a better excuse than having a bad cough. About 14 million others might be using the same excuse.</p> <p>A new survey released Wednesday by the Workforce Institute at Kronos and Mucinex details an estimated 13.9 million Americans will call in sick Monday after Super Bowl LII, making it one of the biggest sick days of the year.</p> <p>The Monday after the Super Bowl has been notoriously known as a day where people call out of work. Last year, 16.5 million Americans said they planned to call in sick because of the game, according to a study done last year by the same companies.</p> <p>"We've been researching the Big Game's effect on the workforce for more than a decade and while numbers may fluctuate each year, one clear fact remains: #SuperSickMonday is often the biggest day in America for calling out of work," said Joyce Maroney, Executive Director, The Workforce Institute at Kronos Incorporated.</p> <p>The numbers could go up, too, because of a harsh flu season this year.</p> <p>Cases of influenza have risen sharply across the nation, according to the Centers for Disease Control. This year is on track to be as bad the 2014-15 outbreak that caused an estimated 56,000 deaths, federal health officials said.</p> <p>"There's been a bad flu strain this year and it may have an impact on people calling out on Monday, but we don't anticipate it playing a major role in changing the stats," said Brian Dolan, Equity Lead for U.S. Health at RB, which owns Mucinex.</p> <p>He said what coast you live on could play a small role due to differing time zones, but most people will still be up late with the post-game show and parties.</p> <p>Over the years, 1 in 5 Americans said they have called in sick the Monday after the Super Bowl, according to the survey.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/02 Turmoil in the Maldives
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/ap-explains-turmoil-maldives-52786544
GIST	<p>The Maldives' Supreme Court ordered the release of imprisoned politicians, including exiled ex-President Mohamed Nasheed, saying their guilty verdicts had been politically influenced.</p> <p>The ruling set off hours of clashes in the streets of Male, the capital, and could allow Nasheed, the nation's first democratically elected president and the main rival of President Yameen Abdul Gayoom, to challenge</p>

Yameen when he seeks re-election later this year.

A look at what led to the turmoil:

AN AUTOCRAT AND ELECTIONS

The Maldives, an Indian Ocean archipelago of nearly 1,200 islands with a population of just 390,000 people, was ruled for three decades by strongman Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. He was voted from office in 2008 in the first democratic elections. Mohamed Nasheed won that vote but resigned in 2012 amid public protests for ordering the arrest of a senior judge. In 2013, Nasheed lost a chaotic presidential election to the current president, who is half brother of the longtime ruler.

DEMOCRATIC SETBACK

Yameen and his ruling Progressive Party of Maldives have rolled back many of the democratic gains seen in the archipelago since 2008, with all of his potential political opponents either jailed or in exile. The government has also curbed freedom of speech and assembly, with heavy fines imposed on journalists and social media users found guilty of defamation. In 2015, Nasheed was sentenced to 13 years in prison for ordering the judge's 2012 arrest. He received asylum in Britain after traveling there on medical leave.

THE OPPOSITION AND THE AUTOCRAT (AGAIN)

Former strongman Maumoon Abdul Gayoom has broken with his half brother and at least eight ruling party lawmakers loyal to Gayoom have defected from the ruling party, saying they would work with Nasheed's opposition Maldivian Democratic Party to stop the reversals in democracy. In March 2017, Nasheed, Gayoom and two other parties signed an agreement to form an opposition alliance. In July, Maldivian security forces locked down parliament on Yameen's orders, as the alliance mounted an attempt to impeach the parliamentary speaker, the president's ally.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/02 Shanghai: van plows into crowd; 18 hurt
-----------------	--

SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/van-carrying-gas-tanks-plows-pedestrians-shanghai-52783140
---------------	---

GIST	<p>A minivan hauling gas canisters plowed into pedestrians near a prominent park and burst into flames in downtown Shanghai on Friday, injuring 18 people in the heart of the Chinese financial hub, local authorities reported.</p> <p>Police appeared to dismiss fears that the crash was a deliberate attack, describing it as an accident caused when a driver who was smoking lost control of his vehicle and veered onto the sidewalk.</p> <p>The 40-year-old driver, who police identified only by his surname Chen, and two other people suffered serious injuries. Chen works for a Shanghai metals company and had no criminal record but was now under suspicion of transporting dangerous materials, police said.</p>
-------------	---

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 NTSB: 'issues' reported at grade crossing
-----------------	--

SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/US/witnesses-report-issues-crossing-amtrak-accident-ntsb/story?id=52767496
---------------	---

<p>GIST</p>	<p>Witnesses interviewed by the NTSB reported "issues" at the grade crossing where an Amtrak train carrying GOP lawmakers slammed into a garbage truck near Charlottesville, Virginia, NTSB officials confirmed today.</p> <p>In the days leading up to the crash -- which killed one person and injured at least six -- the gates "weren't working right," a neighbor told ABC News. The gates would sometimes block the crossing for hours, even when a train was nowhere in sight, he said.</p> <p>Buckingham Branch Railroad, the company responsible for track and signal maintenance, declined to comment on alleged malfunctions.</p> <p>The NTSB hopes information from the lead locomotive's forward-facing camera, which has been transported to Washington, D.C., for download and evaluation, will shed light on what occurred at the crossing Wednesday.</p> <p>Data downloaded from the trailing locomotive's event data recorder reveals that the train was traveling at about 61 mph when the throttle transitioned from full to idle. Twenty seconds later, the train came to a stop after colliding with the truck.</p> <p>The impact separated the cab from the freight, with garbage strewn alongside the tracks. Lawmakers, including several who are doctors, attempted CPR on the occupants, who were thrown from the vehicle.</p> <p>Time Disposal, the owner of the truck, has been "very cooperative" through the investigation, NTSB officials said.</p> <p>The 30-year-old driver of the truck worked for Time Disposal for about seven years, according to the NTSB, which said it is "in the process of trying to interview the driver."</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

<p>HEADLINE</p>	<p>02/01 Federal officials blame Puerto Rico</p>
<p>SOURCE</p>	<p>http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/us-puerto-rico-lacked-leadership-communication-post-storm-52768743?</p>
<p>GIST</p>	<p>Federal officials on Thursday blamed a lack of leadership, money and communication in Puerto Rico for setting back hurricane recovery efforts in the U.S. territory.</p> <p>FEMA Deputy Regional Administrator Ahsha Tribble said the island's bureaucracy and the power company's inability to pay for supplies it ordered after Hurricane Maria slowed efforts to restore electricity. Nearly half a million power customers remain in the dark more than four months after the Category 4 storm, which destroyed two-thirds of the power distribution system, killed dozens of people and caused up to an estimated \$94 billion in damage.</p> <p>Tribble said it was "extremely difficult" to work with Puerto Rico's Electric Power Authority immediately after the storm to figure out what it needed to rebuild the system. She also said the company's financial constraints led to a lack of trust among FEMA suppliers and that appointing an interim power company director in the middle of the disaster led to challenges with leadership. In addition, communication was strained, she said.</p> <p>"In an emergency, when you have eight layers of approval to get something done, it's not working for us," she said. "You put all that together, and it's a recipe for disaster."</p> <p>Tribble was among several officials who spoke before a federal control board that oversees Puerto Rico's finances and is considering a plan to privatize the power company, which is \$9 billion in debt. It would be the largest restructuring of a public entity in U.S. history.</p>

Energy experts told the board that a lack of maintenance, heavily loaded lines and shoddy work done by Puerto Rico's power company over the years contributed to the power grid's extensive failure after the hurricane.

Sanjay Bose, an official with ConEdison who was helping after the hurricane, said his crews in Puerto Rico observed many problems, including poles that had been installed at a more shallow depth than industry standard.

"It's not one single thing that I can point my finger at," he said. "Maintenance would have prevented some of the damage."

Power company spokesman Geraldo Quinones referred a request for comment to the island's financial authority, whose spokesman did not respond.

Col. Donovan Ollar of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers told the board that only 61 percent of the power company's transmission system is now complete. Part of the problem is that some of the equipment Puerto Rico uses is unique to the island and is no longer made by manufacturers in the U.S. mainland. In addition, Puerto Rico uses 200 to 300 types of transformers when the industry standard is three to four, he said.

Ollar also said that makeshift repairs done by the power company to keep the system running prior to the hurricane created more work for his crews.

"It makes it problematic to come back and do it properly," he said, adding that he wants to rebuild the system to mirror those in the U.S. mainland so when companies fly in, they can use the same equipment.

Officials noted that Puerto Rico did not activate a mutual aid agreement with mainland power companies until Oct. 31, more than a month after Hurricane Maria hit. Meanwhile, shortly after the storm, the power company's former director signed a \$300 million contract with a small Montana company called Whitefish Holdings Inc. to help with restoration efforts. The director has since resigned and the contract was cancelled.

FEMA official Ahsha Tribble defended that contract, saying that U.S. power companies under the mutual aid agreement were not capable of repairing the transmission system given the extent of the damage.

[Return to Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Ex-Mayor Murray \$116K a year for life
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/times-watchdog/ed-murrays-time-as-seattle-mayor-boosted-his-pension-past-100000-a-year-for-life/
GIST	<p>Former Seattle Mayor Ed Murray, who resigned in September amid child sexual-abuse allegations, has started drawing public retirement benefits that will pay him \$115,920 a year for the rest of his life.</p> <p>Murray's retirement benefits include gross monthly pension payments of about \$8,460 from the state and \$1,200 from the city, records show.</p> <p>His total retirement pay was significantly enhanced by the nearly \$185,000 annual salary he drew during his first two years as mayor — Murray's final stop along a more than two-decade career in Washington politics.</p> <p>All told, Murray's annual retirement pay easily will surpass earnings for 18 of his 21 years as an elected official, records show. It's also about \$35,920 more — or almost 1½ times greater — than Seattle's median annual household income of about \$80,000.</p> <p>Murray, who declined an in-person interview about his retirement, answered some questions through his attorney, Steve Fogg.</p>

“Ed was a public servant not making a lot of money each year until he became mayor,” Fogg said. “His focal point was on being mayor and his public service, it wasn’t on retirement.”

Though seemingly comfortable, Murray’s retirement isn’t peculiar; he’s reaping benefits entitled to him under state law and pension plan rules.

Murray is among a small subset of Washington public employees who retire as dual members of pension plans from both the state and one of three large cities (Seattle, Tacoma and Spokane) that provide their own. That guarantees him two monthly pension payments for life. And, because his state and city benefit plans are “portable,” they can be used to help each other maximize retirement benefits.

Both of Murray’s pensions are calculated in part based on his highest average monthly pay for any two consecutive years along with the total number of years worked.

Murray, who turned 62 in May, qualified for his state pension at age 60. When he resigned as mayor, he chose January 1, 2016, as the effective date of his state retirement, giving him two full years of city pay — or an average \$15,405 per month — to calculate his state pension benefits. He also received a one-time retroactive retirement payment of \$83,025, records show.

His 18 years of state employment, in turn, helped Murray qualify for a city pension. With less than four years as Seattle’s mayor, Murray otherwise would not have met his city retirement plan’s five-year employment requirement to become fully vested.

The former mayor downplayed his financial prospects during the scandal that last year that derailed his political career. Between April and September, when the mayor resigned, five men accused Murray of paying for sex or sexually assaulting them as teenagers decades ago.

Murray denies all the allegations.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 SEA: renovations, record growth
SOURCE	http://www.kiro7.com/news/local/record-number-of-passengers-pushes-expansion-at-sea-tac-airport/692754662
GIST	<p>SEATAC, Wash. - The Port of Seattle says Sea-Tac Airport is hitting a record-breaking seventh year of passenger growth as billions of dollars’ worth of renovations and expansions are underway.</p> <p>President of the Port Commission, Courtney Gregoire, told KIRO 7 the opening of a new International Arrivals Facility is needed to be able to serve more passengers and improve the travel experience.</p> <p>“By opening up the facility, using new technology and by encouraging our federal government to have a few more customs and border protection agents to give everyone a better experience when they come to our region,” Gregoire said at a news conference Thursday.</p> <p>Sea-Tac Airport saw nearly 47 million passengers come through last year, and they expect to break records again in 2018.</p> <p>The airport expects to spend \$3.2 billion on development between 2017 and 2022. No taxpayer dollars are used to fund airport projects.</p> <p>Port commissioners say the expansion projects include the arrivals facility, a renovation of the Central Terminal dining area and a North Satellite modernization.</p> <p>Work on the \$17 million renovation of the Central Terminal dining area will begin Feb. 8. It will add</p>

	10,000 more square feet and provide more dining and retail options, including charging stations for travelers to plug in their personal electronic devices, new sit-down restaurants and more food options closer to passenger gates.
Return to Top	

Cyber Awareness

[Top of page](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Apple removes Telegram app from store
SOURCE	https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/news/2018/02/01/apple-removes-secretive-telegram-messaging-app-app-store/1086302001/
GIST	<p>Telegram’s founder and CEO said Apple removed the company’s controversial messaging apps from the iOS App Store because of content that apparently violated Apple’s guidelines.</p> <p>“We were alerted by Apple that inappropriate content was made available to our users, and both apps were taken off the App Store,” Pavel Durov remarked on Twitter. “Once we have protections in place, we expect the apps to be back on the App Store.” He did not comment on timing.</p> <p>Telegram’s free apps are still available for Android in the Google Play store. The apps can still be downloaded onto a computer via the Mac version of the App Store.</p> <p>Apple also confirmed the removal of the iOS apps but gave no reason. In general terms, Apple’s guidelines indicate that "apps should not include content that is offensive, insensitive, upsetting, intended to disgust or in exceptionally poor taste." Nor should they be inflammatory or intended to cause physical harm, the company says.</p> <p>Telegram has not yet responded to a USA TODAY request for comment.</p> <p>Durov, a Russian programmer who has been referred to as the “Mark Zuckerberg of Russia,” fled his native country in 2014. He has since run Telegram from various overseas outposts, most recently Dubai. On its website, the company said it is “ready to relocate again if local regulations change.”</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Court: can’t sue Twitter for terror support
SOURCE	https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2018/02/appeals-court-twitter-cant-be-sued-for-material-support-of-terrorism/
GIST	<p>An appeals court has ruled that Twitter is not liable for the deaths of two American military contractors who were killed in Jordan in 2015.</p> <p>In a Wednesday decision, the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with a lower court’s ruling in 2016 for dismissal of the case, <i>Fields v. Twitter</i>.</p> <p>As Ars reported, the plaintiffs claimed that Twitter violated the Anti-Terrorism Act by providing Twitter accounts to the terrorist group. The plaintiffs, who represent the estate of the two deceased men, did not allege that any specific tweets instigated the terrorist to kill the US contractors, and they did not allege that ISIS recruited or trained the terrorist over Twitter. However, they did claim that Twitter provided “material support” for terrorism by allowing ISIS and its sympathizers on the social media network.</p> <p>A three-judge panel unanimously ruled that the plaintiffs had not shown that Twitter was close enough to the violence that tragically ended the lives of their loved ones.</p> <p>“We conclude that Twitter has the better of the argument and hold that to satisfy the ATA’s ‘by reason of</p>

	requirement, a plaintiff must show at least some direct relationship between the injuries that he or she suffered and the defendant's acts," the judges wrote .
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Hackers already targeted Winter Olympics
SOURCE	https://www.wired.com/story/pyeongchang-winter-olympics-cyberattacks/
GIST	<p>THE OLYMPICS HAVE always been a geopolitical microcosm: beyond the athletic match-ups, they provide a vehicle for diplomacy and propaganda, and even, occasionally, a proxy for war. It stands to reason, then, that in 2018 they've also become a nexus of hacker skullduggery. The Olympics unfolding next week in Pyeongchang may already be the most thoroughly hacked in the games' history—with potentially more surprises to come.</p> <p>More so than any previous Olympics, the run-up to Pyeongchang has been plagued by apparent state-sponsored hackers: One Russia-linked campaign has stolen and leaked embarrassing documents from Olympic organizations, while security researchers have tracked another operation, possibly North Korean, that appears to be spying on South Korean Olympics-related organizations.</p> <p>Security researchers tracking those two operations say the full scope of either remains far from clear, leaving the looming question of whether they could still present new disruptions timed to unfold during the games themselves. And more broadly, the intrusions signal that the geopolitical tensions that have long underscored the Olympics now extend into the digital realm as well.</p> <p>"The Olympics have always been the most politicized sporting event of them all," says Thomas Rid, a professor of strategic studies at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies. "It's not a surprise at all that they've become a high-profile target for hacking."</p> <p>Operation GoldDragon The far stealthier of the two known Olympics hacking operations—and perhaps the most troubling—has quietly targeted South Korean Olympics-related organizations for well over a month. Researchers for security firm McAfee discovered just this week that the campaign, which they've named Operation GoldDragon, has attempted to plant three distinct spyware tools on target machines that would enable hackers to deeply scour the compromised computers' contents. McAfee identifies those malicious tools by the names GoldDragon, BravePrince, and GHOST419.</p> <p>The firm's researchers say they've linked those malware samples to a phishing campaign that lures victims with Korean-language emails, indicating South Korean targets. The messages, which spoof a note from South Korea's National Counter-Terrorism Center—and, according to McAfee, were timed to actual terrorism drills in Pyeongchang—targeted a BCC'd list of more than 300 Olympics-related targets, McAfee says, with only the address "icehockey@pyeongchang2018.com" visible in its "to" line. Analyzing the email's metadata, however, McAfee identified other intended victims, including local tourism organizations in Pyeongchang, ski resorts, transportation, and key departments of the Pyeongchang Olympics effort.</p> <p>The hackers attached a Korean-language Word document to the email, crafted to run a malicious script on the target machine. If the victim clicked "enable content" after opening that tainted attachment, they would give the attacker remote access to the computer. The attackers could use that initial, temporary foothold to install their spyware for more persistent visibility into any hacked machine. McAfee notes that script is hidden in an innocent-looking image file with clever steganography and other obfuscation tactics.</p> <p>McAfee traced the phishing scheme to a remote server in the Czech Republic, registered with fake credentials to a South Korean government ministry. And they found publicly accessible logs on that remote server that showed victim machines were in fact connecting to it from South Korea, a sign of actual infections. "Was this a successful campaign? The answer is yes," says McAfee chief scientist Raj Samani. "We know that it's had victims."</p>

Despite all of those findings, the origin and the ultimate aim of that relatively sophisticated malware campaign remains unclear. But based on the Korean language and targeting, Samani hints that his working theory points to a North Korean espionage operation keeping tabs on its southern neighbor.

That spying may seem to run counter to a recent thawing of diplomatic relations between the two Koreas, one that has even resulted in a combination of the two countries' national women's hockey teams. But North Korea likely wouldn't call off its aggressive hacking over a momentary olive branch. "I would guess it's a 'keep your friends close and your enemies closer' approach," Samani says.

Anti-Doping Bears

A far louder and more explicit hacker threat has come from a notorious outfit linked with the Kremlin's GRU military intelligence agency, known as Fancy Bear, or APT28—according to many security researchers, almost certainly the same Fancy Bear that hacked the Democratic National Committee and Clinton campaign in the midst of the 2016 election.

Since as early as September of that year, those brazen hackers have repeatedly targeted athletic organizations, with the intent of exposing evidence of what they claim is widespread doping in Western countries, an apparent retaliation for the ban of Russian athletes from the 2016 and 2018 games for the same charge. "We will start with the US team which has disgraced its name by tainted victories," the hackers wrote in a message on their website when they first began leaking documents from the World Anti-Doping Association in September of 2016. "Wait for sensational proof of famous athletes taking doping substances any time soon."

At the time, the Fancy Bear hackers released the private medical records of star US athletes Serena Williams, Venus Williams, and Simone Biles, touting permissions they had received to use potentially performance-enhancing drugs to treat attention deficit disorder and muscle inflammation.

This year, Fancy Bear planned its Olympic-hacking far more proactively. Starting in early January, they published two collections of hacked documents from Olympics-related agencies: One set revealed political tensions between officials at the International Olympic Committee and the WADA officials tasked with policing the games' athletes. A second release later in the month again pointed to special permissions given to certain athletes—a member of the Swedish luge team takes asthma medication, for instance—and an Italian athlete who had at one point missed a drug test. And a third leak on Wednesday pointed to the case of Shawn Barber, a Canadian pole vaulter allowed to compete in the 2016 games despite at one point testing positive for cocaine.

None of Fancy Bear's recent releases has proven any clear wrongdoing—at least, nothing remotely comparable to Russia's systematic doping program for thousands of athletes—and all have generally been ignored by the sporting world and the Western media. But Russian state news outlets have nonetheless faithfully rehashed the leaks. And Johns Hopkins' Rid says the hacks, like the attacks on the DNC and Clinton campaign in 2016, have an effect that's not easily measured or dismissed.

Rid compares the operation to the KGB's tactics in 1984, after Russia was banned from the Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. The spy agency responded by mailing forged KKK pamphlets threatening race-based attacks to members of 20 visiting Asian and African teams. "There's no great goal they want to achieve," Rid says. "It's more one of throwing wrenches and sand into the gears of a machine, to make life more difficult for your adversary, engender debate and internal conflict among allies to distract from the confrontation that's harming you."

More Ammunition

Fancy Bear may yet have more leaks in store. Security firms Trend Micro and ThreatConnect have linked the group's propaganda campaign with collections of spoofed domains they've discovered, likely used in the group's well-honed phishing attacks. Many of those fake domains haven't yet resulted in leaks, but may have nonetheless led to compromises of Olympics-related organizations. They've spotted registrations for spoofed domains designed to mimic the US Anti-Doping Agency, British counterpart UK Anti-Doping,

the Olympic Council of Asia, European Ice Hockey Federation, the International Ski Federation, the International Biathlon Union, the International Bobsleigh and the Skeleton Federation.

Security firms, to be clear, have no evidence that those organizations have been compromised. But they point out that the same group that's registered fake domains that seem to have been used in earlier Fancy Bear phishing and leaking operations registered fake domains for those targets, too. Any one of them might be a source of new, disruptive secret-spilling before or during the games. "In the run-up to the Olympics, we'd expect to see continuing activity from Fancy Bear and other APTs," says ThreatConnect researcher Kyle Ehmke, using the abbreviation for "Advanced Persistent Threat," an industry term for sophisticated state-sponsored hackers. "There's no reason to think they'll conclude operations just because of what's already been released."

In the parallel case of the likely North Korean espionage campaign, McAfee's chief scientist Samani notes that hacking operation could also get worse before it gets better. If the hackers behind that campaign change their motivation, nothing prevents them from using machines they've compromised on target networks to launch attacks that go beyond espionage, such as destroying data or disrupting networks.

"We do know that other campaigns have gone down the intelligence path and then used it as a vehicle to cause destruction," Samani says, noting that there's no indication of the hackers' motivation beyond mere spying one way or another in this case. "We have no idea what may follow."

All of those indicators of digital meddling, from leaks to espionage campaigns, don't quite add up to a cyberdoomsday scenario. But for the Olympics' organizers—or the athletes waiting for their once-in-a-lifetime spotlight—the notion of multiple, determined hacker teams targeting the world's biggest sporting event should provide enough anxieties to last until the closing ceremony.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Hostile states using proxy hackers
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/02/01/heres-how-hostile-states-are-hiding-behind-independent-hackers/?utm_term=.ae0410119aff
GIST	<p>More and more states are using supposedly independent hackers as proxies to project power both at home and abroad. According to James R. Clapper Jr., former director of national intelligence, more than 30 countries are now pursuing offensive cyber capabilities. Some of them rely on hackers who are not part of the government. In the past, there has been more rumor than fact about how these proxy relationships are organized and structured. However, the veil of secrecy is beginning to lift.</p> <p>For example, in November, a 22-year-old Canadian hacker pleaded guilty to having worked with two officers of the Russian intelligence agency FSB. A year earlier, Germany extradited a member of the Syrian Electronic Army to the United States. Meanwhile, the seven Iranian hackers accused of being responsible for the massive distributed denial of service DDoS attacks against financial institutions in the United States in 2012 remain at large. These and other cases provide new information about these proxy relationships and their consequences.</p> <p>Malicious nonstate hackers are a real threat</p> <p>Policymakers and academics have had a hard time keeping up with how cybersecurity is changing on the ground. Alarmist debates about whether “cyberwar” would take place did get senior policymakers and the public to care about cybersecurity, but at the expense of making them focus on the threat from other states and interstate conflict. This means that they have systematically neglected the role that hackers detached from the state play as proxies and how they facilitate state actors to develop and quickly deploy offensive cyber capabilities.</p> <p>It is now clear that actors other than states can cause significant harm through hacking. In fact, less sophisticated actors can potentially pose a greater risk than sophisticated actors because they often lack the skills to develop more precise code that would limit the effect of the malware. The WannaCry ransomware</p>

that hit computer systems worldwide last year, and forced hospitals in the United Kingdom to turn patients away, demonstrates what can happen if a less sophisticated actor uses malware with the intent to cause harm.

Here's what we know about the Kremlin's playbook for creating division in the U.S. (Jenny Starrs/The Washington Post)

It is possible to identify hackers

One of the big problems in cybersecurity is identifying attackers. This is referred to as the “[attribution problem](#).” However, attributing malicious activity online has become easier in recent years. The Russian, Syrian and Iranian attacks mentioned above led to detailed indictments, which the U.S. government decided to unseal over the past two years. These indictments illustrate that, while attribution remains difficult, for the U.S. government it has become less a question whether it is possible but how long it will take and whether it is [willing to disclose](#) what it knows to the public.

Of course, part of the reason is that attackers make mistakes and can afford to be sloppy because they have to fear few consequences (if they remain [beyond reach](#) of U.S. agencies). That is why some governments, including the United States, and some specialized private threat intelligence companies, are able to successfully identify the source of an attack with sufficient confidence and evidence to make the case stick in court.

What hackers do tells us how states think

What proxies do helps tell us how their state sponsors think about cyberthreats and how they try to project power online. [Tehran](#), for example, cares at least as much about hacking the accounts of dissidents and potential challengers to the regime as about espionage against other countries. Moscow, Beijing, Tehran and other governments don't think in terms of cybersecurity but information security — a more expansive concept including content and the control of information. High-profile incidents during the past five years reflect this worldview; the attacks include the [Sony cyberattack](#), the combination of information and cyberoperations in [Ukraine](#) and the [GitHub incident](#). These differences among states explain why the international cybersecurity debate cannot be separated from discussions about human rights, at least not as long as some governments care more about regime stability and the perceived threat of information than about technical vulnerabilities and improving the resilience of computer systems.

Hacking is changing international relations

A decade ago, very few policymakers and media outlets paid serious attention to cybersecurity. After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and the Iraq War, they focused on terrorism and conventional war. Many were skeptical that hacking would have a systematic impact on international affairs. Today, it is clear that this hacking wasn't just hype. It has given actors the ability to cause harmful effects around the globe — assuming there is Internet access — far more cheaply than through conventional means.

This increase in reach is the single most important reason why hacking poses new risks to international peace and security. For example, the tensions between the United States and North Korea did not first change from a regional to a global conflict because of the development of an intercontinental ballistic missile but because of North Korea's ability to hack systems such as Sony's. More recent incidents [targeting SWIFT](#), the central nervous system of global finance, highlight how vulnerable even major financial institutions remain to third tier cyber-powers like North Korea.

More states are using proxies

More states have gotten a taste for exploiting the Internet for their purposes. Mercenaries like the 22-year old in Canada, who was paid by the Russian FSB, or politically driven hacktivists like the four Iranians in their mid-20s are helping countries to develop and deploy offensive cyber tools. Ensuring that proxy hackers do not escape their masters and countering their malicious behavior poses major policy challenges. Over the next few years, we will find out whether the new administration's [focus](#) on trying to impose greater consequences in order to deter attacks will work. If successful, it will nudge other countries to tighten the leash on their proxies. If it raises the costs of malicious hackers only a little, it will likely just make them invest a little more time and money to become stealthier and better at hiding their tracks.

HEADLINE	02/01 FBI warns of fake FBI IC3 email
SOURCE	https://www.theregister.co.uk/2018/02/01/fbi_malware_emails/
GIST	<p>Some scammers may have bitten off more than they can chew after they tried impersonating the FBI to spread malware.</p> <p>The Feds' Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) issued an alert on Wednesday warning that it has received numerous complaints from citizens who have received emails purporting to be from IC3. Each message states that the recipient is due money as compensation from a cyber-attack, and asks them to fill out the attached document with their personal details – and, yup, you guessed it – that file is laden with malware.</p> <p>The email claims a Nigerian had been arrested by the FBI in Atlanta, USA, and that the recipient's email address had been found on the imaginary scammer's computer. All the mark has to do to pocket their windfall is return the document with their contact details and wait for the cash to arrive.</p> <p>"At least three other versions of the IC3 impersonation scam have been identified," the FBI warned. "As of July 2017, the IC3 has received numerous victim complaints regarding the scam."</p> <p>Two other variants of the emails are in circulation. One claims to come from the FBI IC3 office in Houston, Texas, and informs the lucky recipient that they are due \$10.5m in compensation from banking fraud.</p> <p>The third letter take a more threatening tone, saying that the IP address associated with the recipient's computer has been under investigation since September 2017 for online crimes. The receiver is instructed to fill out the enclosed booby-trapped form and return it.</p> <p>So far the FBI says no one appears to have been financially hurt by the scam, and it is probing the con. Agents are also seeking out the scammers – and very few things piss off the G-Men like someone taking their name in vain. Expect arrests.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 HHS issues cyber extortion newsletter
SOURCE	https://www.dataprotectionreport.com/2018/02/hhs-ocr-issues-cyber-extortion-newsletter/
GIST	<p>This week, the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) published a January 2018 newsletter focusing on “cyber extortion.”</p> <p>Cyber extortion often involves an attacker gaining access to an organization’s computer system, stealing sensitive information, and threatening to publish the information. Healthcare and public health organizations are often the targets of these attacks, so affected data frequently includes protected health information, or PHI. The OCR newsletter indicates that incidents of cyber extortion have been steadily increasing over the past several years and will continue to disrupt many organizations.</p> <p>Cyber extortion can take many forms. The OCR newsletter highlights ransomware and Denial of Service (DoS) attacks in particular.</p> <p>Ransomware involves the denial of access to a user’s data –typically, a hacker encrypts an organization’s data with a key known only to the hacker, and the hacker will demand payment from the organization in order to provide the decryption key.</p> <p>Ransomware may also involve the deployment of malware that destroys data. A U.S. government interagency report indicates that there have been approximately 4,000 daily ransomware attacks since early</p>

2016.

In response, OCR published a [factsheet](#) to provide guidance on preventing and responding to ransomware attackers for HIPAA covered entities and business associates. The factsheet urges covered entities and business associates to maintain frequent backups and ensure the ability to recover data from backups.

DoS and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) are other forms of cyber extortion highlighted in the OCR newsletter. These typically direct an abnormally high volume of network traffic to targeted computers so that the affected computers appear down or otherwise inaccessible. Attackers either initiate an attack and demand payment to halt the attack, or they may threaten the attack and demand payment to stop it from happening in the first place. OCR also highlighted DoS and DDoS attacks in a [prior security newsletter](#), which includes tips on identifying and stopping an attack.

Cyber attackers constantly create new versions of malware and organizations must be vigilant to protect their data from attack. The HHS [website](#) includes a number of guidance materials for HIPAA professionals including standards, checklists, and awareness newsletters to assist with the vigilance required to protect sensitive data from attackers.

[Return to Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Massive wave of attacks on Dutch banks
SOURCE	http://www.zdnet.com/article/ddos-mystery-whos-behind-this-massive-wave-of-attacks-targeting-dutch-banks/
GIST	<p>There is as yet no indication of who is behind the massive distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks on Netherlands banks and government websites that ran from last weekend to Tuesday. Initial reports suggesting a Russian connection appear baseless.</p> <p>The attacks began just a couple of days after media reports stated that Dutch intelligence tipped off their American counterparts about state-sponsored Russian spies hacking the apparatus of the Democratic Party and stealing the infamous "leaked emails" that may have swayed the 2016 election.</p> <p>The publication NL Times reported that the Bratislava-based security company ESET had identified the attacks as coming from servers in Russia.</p> <p>That fact would, of course, be less than solid evidence that Russian attackers are to blame, because DDoS attacks can bounce all over the place before finally hitting their target, always making attribution troublesome.</p> <p>But when ZDNet contacted the security firm, it denied ever making a claim about a Russian connection. "This report about an ESET claim was an unfortunate mistake and misrepresentation by one Dutch news outlet and was corrected by them," spokesman Branislav Ondrasik said.</p> <p>The bank ABN Amro became the first victim on Saturday, while Rabobank and ING Bank were hit on Monday, along with the Dutch Taxation Authority. All four were hit again on Tuesday, but this time their defenses reportedly fared better.</p> <p>ABN Amro told ZDNet on Wednesday morning that the attack was "not ongoing at the moment". The bank stressed in an earlier statement that the DDoS did not threaten the security of its services -- it just knocked them out.</p> <p>"This weekend's DDoS attacks were heavier than previous ones and lasted longer. At the moment, it is unknown who is behind the attacks, and in by far most cases, the source of an attack is never discovered," ABN Amro said.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/02 Bitcoin continues downward trend
SOURCE	https://money.usnews.com/investing/news/articles/2018-02-02/bitcoin-slides-further-headed-for-worst-week-since-2013
GIST	<p>LONDON (Reuters) - Bitcoin fell 9 percent on Friday, leaving the best-known cryptocurrency down more than 30 percent this week and headed for its worst weekly performance since April 2013.</p> <p>The cryptocurrency dropped to as low as \$8,155 at 0915 GMT on the Luxembourg-based bitstamp exchange amid a broader rout in the market. Other large cryptocurrencies have lost more than 20 percent of their value in the last 24 hours of trading, according to Coinmarketcap.com.</p> <p>A growing regulatory backlash against digital coins has sent investors scrambling to sell this week. Bitcoin is down more than half from a December peak of almost \$20,000 after it notched up a more than 1,000 gain last year.</p>
	<p>Return to Top</p>

HEADLINE	02/02 New Monero mining malware infects PCs
SOURCE	https://www.hackread.com/monero-mining-malware-using-2-nsa-exploits/
GIST	<p>Another day, another Monero mining malware – This one uses two NSA exploits and so far it has mined over 8,900 Monero.</p> <p>It looks like the craze of cryptocurrency mining is taking over the world by storm as every new day there is a new malware targeting unsuspecting users to use their computing power to mine cryptocurrency. Recently, the IT security researchers at Proofpoint have discovered a Monero mining malware that uses leaked NSA (National Security Agency) EternalBlue exploit to spread itself.</p> <p>Dubbed Smominru by researchers, this highly sophisticated malware has infected 526,000 Windows-based computers since May 2017 and is capable of mining around 24 Monero (XMR) per day which is currently \$5,657. So far, the malware has generated 8,900 Monero which is around \$2 million from targets in India, Russia, and Taiwan.</p> <p>“Based on the hash power associated with the Monero payment address for this operation, it appeared that this botnet was likely twice the size of Adylkuzz,” researchers wrote in their blog post.</p> <p>Adylkuzz is another cryptocurrency malware appeared after the WannaCry attack. Adylkuzz also uses EternalBlue and targets Windows-based computers to mine Monero cryptocurrency.</p> <p>The EternalBlue exploit was leaked by Shadow Brokers hacking group after hacking the agency. The same exploit was then used by hackers to spread WannaCry ransomware campaign which affected over 200,000 victims and more than 300,000 computers around the world.</p> <p>According to researchers, hackers are also using another NSA exploit called EsteemAudit to spread Smominru malware. The EsteemAudit exploit was leaked by Shadow Brokers in April 2017. The ex-NSA spy Edward Snowden had described the leak as “The mother of all exploits.”</p> <p>Furthermore, Smominru’s command and control (C&C) infrastructure is hosted on SharkTech, a DDoS protection company in Las Vegas, NV. Proofpoint informed SharkTech about the ongoing cybercriminal activity on their server but did not receive any reply from the company.</p> <p>“As bitcoin has become prohibitively resource-intensive to mine outside of dedicated mining farms, interest in Monero has increased dramatically. While Monero can no longer be mined effectively on desktop computers, a distributed botnet like that described here can prove quite lucrative for its operators,” said Proofpoint researchers.</p>

	“The operators of this botnet are persistent, use all available exploits to expand their botnet, and have found multiple ways to recover after sinkhole operations,” researchers added.
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 JenX botnet targets IoT devices
SOURCE	https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/jenx-botnet-emerges-to-target-iot/
GIST	<p>A new botnet, dubbed JenX, shares characteristics with the Satori botnet, and is using Grand Theft Auto (GTA) to recruit internet of things (IoT) devices.</p> <p>According to Radware, the botnet uses hosted servers to find and infect new victims, leveraging one of two known vulnerabilities that have become popular in IoT botnets recently: CVE-2014-8361 and CVE-2017-17215. Both have related exploits.</p> <p>Both exploit vectors are known from the Satori botnet. The malware is based on the Satori code that was part of a recent public Pastebin post by the author of BrickerBot, along with attributes from the PureMasuta botnet, which had its source code published in an invite-only dark forum, the firm said.</p> <p>Interestingly, the bot herder seems to be a big gaming fan: Radware researchers found that the command and control server is hosted under the domain sancalvicie.com, a site that provides mod servers for Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas, in addition to cybercrime offerings like distributed denial of services (DDoS) via the botnet.</p> <p>One of those services is dubbed “Corriente Divina” (which translates to “divine stream”). It’s described as “God’s wrath will be employed against the IP that you provide us.”</p> <p>According to Radware researcher Pascal Geenens, it provides a DDoS service with a guaranteed bandwidth of 290 to 300 Gbps.</p> <p>Interestingly, it doesn’t have scanning and exploit payloads, meaning that this functionality is centralized. This provides the bot herders with more flexibility to add and improve the functionality as they go.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/02 Study: more ICS accessible via web
SOURCE	http://www.securityweek.com/increasing-number-industrial-systems-accessible-web-study
GIST	<p>The number of industrial control systems (ICS) accessible from the Internet has increased significantly in the past year, reaching more than 175,000 components, according to a new report from Positive Technologies.</p> <p>Using the Shodan, Censys and Google search engines, researchers identified 175,632 ICS components accessible from the Web. In comparison, similar searches conducted in the <u>previous year</u> uncovered just over 162,000 systems.</p> <p>Of all the systems identified in 2017, more than 66,000 were accessible via HTTP, followed by the Fox building automation protocol associated with Honeywell’s Niagara framework (39,000), Ethernet/IP (25,000), BACnet (13,000), and the Lantronix discovery protocol (10,000).</p> <p>The highest percentage of exposed devices, representing 42% of the total, was spotted in the United States. The number of Internet-accessible ICS components in the U.S. increased by 10% compared to 2016, from roughly 50,000 to 64,000. The U.S. is followed at a distance by Germany (13,000 accessible systems), France (7,000), and Canada (7,000).</p> <p>Many of the industrial systems connected to the Web come from Honeywell (26,000), Lantronix (12,000),</p>

SMA (9,000), Beck IPC (9,000), Siemens (6,000) and Rockwell Automation (5,000).

The distribution of Internet-exposed components by type has remained largely the same compared to 2016.

Type of ICS component	Share in 2017	Share in 2016
SCADA/DCS/HMI and/or PLC/RAP (RTU) ¹³	14.2%	13.6%
PLC/RAP (RTU)	13.2%	12.9%
Network equipment	12.9%	5.1%
SCADA/DCS/HMI	7.1%	7.8%
Electrical measuring equipment	6.3%	5.2%
Other	46.5%	55.5%

John Matherly, CEO of the search engine Shodan, has confirmed for *SecurityWeek* that there has been an increase of roughly 10% year-over-year in terms of ICS exposure on the Internet.

“The increase is mostly in building automation protocols and despite the news coverage we haven't seen any decrease in devices,” Matherly said.

According to Positive Technologies, a total of nearly 200 new vulnerabilities were disclosed in 2017, compared to 115 in 2016. Worryingly, 61% of the flaws whose existence was made public last year were rated critical and high severity.

The most common types of vulnerabilities were remote code execution (24%), information disclosure (17%), and buffer overflows (12%). “Most vulnerabilities detected in 2017 can be exploited remotely without needing to obtain any privileges in advance,” Positive Technologies said in its [report](#).

A report published in October by CyberX revealed that one-third of industrial and critical infrastructure systems had been [connected to the Internet](#), based on data obtained by the industrial security firm by passively monitoring traffic from hundreds of operational technology (OT) networks.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE 02/01 US CERT guidelines Olympics visitors

SOURCE <https://www.scmagazine.com/us-cert-posts-cybersecurity-suggestions-for-pyeongchang-winter-olympic-attendees/article/741026/>

GIST With the torch lighting for the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang just over a week away U.S. CERT has issued cybersecurity guidelines for those visiting the games, tips that can also be used in any public environment.

Considering the on-the-go nature of attending the Olympics all of the recommendations center on mobile security hygiene and are very similar to what attendees of Black Hat and Def Con are told.

- Switch off Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connections when not in use.
- Use a credit card to pay for online goods and services.
- When using a public or unsecured wireless connection, avoid using sites and applications that require personal information like log-ins.
- Update mobile software.
- Use strong PINs and passwords.

Other suggestions include have two-factor authentication for your accounts, keep a screen lock active on your device and most importantly take a minute and think before you click on a link.

	<p>There have already been several hacking attempts centered on the Olympics with documents and emails stolen from the International Luge Federation being leaked and McAfee reported in early January campaign targeting organizations involved with the Pyeongchang Olympics that used the games as part of a social engineering plan to trick folks into opening phishing emails.</p> <p>While nation-state backed cyberattacks cannot be ruled out, most experts believe that with North Korea now attending the games and attack from that direction is unlikely, but it does not mean the games are safe.</p> <p>“The largest cyber threat to the Winter Games comes from non-state actors. Hacktivists, cyberterrorists, and fame seekers all see the Olympics as a great venue for their personal cause, whether it's personal fame, the propaganda of a political message or harm for a political purpose,” Ross Rustici, senior director for intelligence services for Cybereason.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Hackers scam BeeToken users of \$1M
SOURCE	https://www.scmagazine.com/phishing-attacks-net-initial-coin-offering-investors-second-time-this-week/article/741031/
GIST	<p>BeeToken customers were duped out of more than \$1 million worth of Ethereum in a phishing scam targeting BeeToken's initial coin offering (ICO) in a scam similar to the one that targeted Experty earlier this week.</p> <p>BeeToken confirmed the attacks on its Twitter and Medium accounts warning customers to be wary of emails and Telegram urging users to send funds as they are most likely fraudulent. Affected users said the attackers were targeting individuals who signed up for the BeeToken newsletter and its KYC process for the ICO, according to TNW.</p> <p>It is unclear how the hackers obtained the information but some users have accused the company of failing to properly store customer data on Reddit forums. BeeToken CEO Jonathan Chou desputed the claims and told the publication that his company does not “store customers' data in a centralized database like Airbnb.”</p> <p>“We are not at risk of exposing all of our customers' data in one go if there is a security breach,” Chou said. “Things do not seem that way now, at least when it comes to their email system.</p> <p>In the Experty attack, cybercriminals also tricked ICO participants into sending funds to the scammer's wallet instead of to the intended company. In this instance, the hacker was able to compromise the computer of an Experty user in order to obtain the victims' email address to send the phishing emails.</p> <p>Some researchers expect to see many more attacks like this moving forward.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Scarabey ransomware w/new tactics
SOURCE	https://www.scmagazine.com/scarabey-ransomware-introduces-new-tactics-distribution/article/741452/
GIST	<p>The malicious actors behind Scarab ransomware have rolled out a new variant, one that uses a different distribution method and ransom threat in order to infect computers and ensure payment.</p> <p>Unlike Scarab the new incarnation, called Scarabey, does not use the Necurs botnet to spread and is targeted at Russian, not English, language speakers, said Malwarebytes researcher vhioureas.</p> <p>On the surface the first difference between the two is distribution, Scarabey favors using Remote Desktop</p>

	<p>Protocol and being manually dropped on servers.</p> <p>The most obvious differentiator is the ransom note. With Scarab the note is written in English, but contains many errors that are synonymous with having been run through an online translator. For the Scarabey note the authors simply used the original source for the Scarab text.</p> <p>“What's interesting is that when you throw the Scarabey note into Google translate...it contains the same grammatical errors as the Scarab note,” vhioureas said, adding, “It would then seem quite likely that, since they decided to target Russians. They released the Scarabey note in their native language to cover more victims.”</p> <p>The threat being used to induce payment was also altered. With Scarab the victim is told that the ransom price will rise the longer it takes to pay up, with Scarabey the attacker says they will begin permanently deleting files, 24 files per 24 hours, if payment is not made.</p> <p>However, vhioureas noted this is a lie as there is nothing in the code to indicate the attacker has in fact copied any files to another location nor does the code contain the ability to delete files remotely.</p> <p>“The conclusion here is that the deletion of files or the idea that the malware authors have access to delete files is purely a scare tactic used to urge users into sending money quickly,” he said.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 Stolen adult site login credentials
SOURCE	https://www.scmagazine.com/kaspersky-research-highlights-cyber-threats-facing-users-of-adult-websites/article/741464/
GIST	<p>Cybercriminals have been using pornography and adult content as a lure to spread malware and steal information since adult content hit the internet, but recent research shows that access to legitimate sites are also fueling a lucrative trade on the dark web.</p> <p>Researchers at Kaspersky Lab examined some of the cyber threats that the users of adult websites and applications face. As more adult content sites begin to turn into content sharing platforms where users can submit their own content, create loyal communities, and like and share content, cybercriminals have found value in stealing and selling adult site login credentials on the dark web, putting more users at risk.</p> <p>And while the outcome of said malware remains the same as in most cases of cybercrime, victims are less likely to report the crimes to anyone because of the stigma associated with admitting to looking for or watching porn.</p> <p>Kaspersky Lab researchers spotted at least 27 variations of PC malware, belonging to three infamous families, specifically designed to hunt for credentials to paid-for porn websites. Among these malware, where banking trojans that had been modified to steal adult website credentials. Cybercriminals also used phishing attacks to obtain the stolen credentials as well.</p> <p>The firm's Naked Online report found that in 2017, these malicious families were seen more than 300,000 times attempting to attack more than 50,000 PCs across the world. The motivation for the stolen credential market is may be price of legitimate services as an annual unlimited account could cost as much as \$119.99 or \$9.99 per month. The desire for anonymity could also be a driving factor as users may not want to deal with purchasing showing up on bank statements.</p> <p>It's also worth noting the average list prices on the dark market for an unlimited account are usually one tenth of the official costs, a stark contrast to other services and products sold which often command a premium. In addition to the low prices, the accounts were being sold in almost unlimited numbers.</p> <p>Researchers spotted more than five thousand unique sales offerings during the course of their researcher</p>

and speculated that many of the breached credentials may have come from the sites themselves.

Since 2016 more than 72 million sets of account credentials for adult content websites were stolen and later appeared online from sites including Cams.com (62.6 million), Penthouse.com (7.1 million), Stripshow (1.42 million), 380,000 of xHamster accounts, and about 791,000 from Brazzers data.

The top five most most-often sold credentials were those for accounts on Naughty America (2,575 sales offers), Brazzers (1,228 sales offers), Mofos (789 sales offers), Reality Kings (294 sales offers), and Pornhub (153 sales offers). Researchers said it's important to not view the ranking as some sort of testament to the security of the sites, but more so as a testimony to the popularity of the sites.

Despite the vast market for stolen credential, researchers warn purchasers of the stolen content put themselves at risk buying stolen credentials is illegal and it's likely the credentials will have already been blocked by the time they are purchased.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Cryptomining attacks rise as big threats
SOURCE	http://www.darkreading.com/attacks-breaches/crypto-mining-attacks-emerge-as-the-new-big-threat-to-enterprises/d/d-id/1330965
GIST	<p>In an ominous trend for businesses, hijacking computers for cryptocurrency mining appears to have become the go-to strategy for cybercriminals looking for a safe and reliable way to generate illegal revenues.</p> <p>Several vendors in recent days have reported a huge surge in illegal crypto-mining activity involving millions of hijacked computers worldwide. Professional cybercriminals are moving away in droves from less profitable exploits to making money via the surging global interest in digital currencies, said Digital Shadows in the latest warning on this trend.</p> <p>The activity has begun to pose as much of a threat to businesses as it does to consumers. Security vendor CrowdStrike recently reported that it had seen multiple instances of businesses being impacted by illegal crypto-mining activity. In some cases, mining tools installed illegally on business systems have caused applications and hardware to crash, causing operational disruptions lasting days and sometimes even weeks, says Bryan York, director of services at CrowdStrike.</p> <p>"We've seen an uptick in unauthorized crypto-mining, or cryptojacking, targeting businesses," he says. "While cryptocurrency mining has typically been viewed as a nuisance, we've recently seen several cases where mining has impacted business operations," York warns.</p> <p>Mining 101</p> <p>Crypto mining is a fairly complex process where a computer's processing resources are used for blockchain transaction verification. Mining is a very CPU-intensive, resource-hogging activity and some digital currencies like Bitcoin require special-purpose hardware to do it. Several other digital currencies like Monero, Zcash, and Ethereum, however, can also be mined by pooling the resources of multiple computers.</p> <p>In return for installing a mining tool and allowing their computer resources to be pooled for mining, the miners or owners of the computers, receive digital coins in return. Mining itself is a legal activity, and many people around the world allow their systems to be used for the purpose in hopes of making some money on the side.</p> <p>In recent months, however, cybercriminals have begun surreptitiously installing crypto-mining tools on victim computers and using resources of those compromised systems for the same purpose. Instead of taking over computers to steal data or install ransomware, cybercriminals have simply begun stealing</p>

system resources and using this to illegally profit from digital currency mining.

"These attacks are much stealthier than their predecessors," Cisco's Talos threat group said in a report this week. "Attackers are not stealing anything more than computing power from their victims and the mining software isn't technically malware."

When installing mining software, some criminals have even begun putting limits on things like CPU usage and amount of cores being used to ensure users don't notice any obvious performance hit as result of mining software running on their system. In theory, victims could remain part of the adversary botnet indefinitely, Talos said in its report.

Driving the trend is the easy availability of do-it-yourself kits that almost anyone can use for illegal mining. Criminals can rent mining botnets for as little as \$30 to \$130 per month, and software for distributing miners for as little as \$29, according to Digital Shadows.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Cybercriminals target cryptocurrencies
SOURCE	https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cryptocurrency-cybercrime/cybercriminals-target-booming-cryptocurrencies-report-idUSKBN1FL5Q7
GIST	<p>NEW YORK (Reuters) - Bitcoin's popularity and the emergence of about 1,500 other digital coins or tokens have drawn more hackers into the red-hot cryptocurrency space, expanding opportunities for crime and fraud, cybersecurity firm Digital Shadows warned in a report on Thursday.</p> <p>"Cybercriminals follow the money and right now they see in the unregulated and largely unsecure world of digital currencies a huge opportunity to target people, businesses and exchanges and make money quickly and easily," said Rick Holland, vice president of strategy at Digital Shadows.</p> <p>Digital currencies have quickly grown into a more mainstream asset class over the last two years as corporations and financial institutions have expanded use of the underlying blockchain technology.</p> <p>With weekly launches of new alternative coins, or "altcoins," cybercriminals have developed several schemes to defraud cryptocurrency holders. "Crypto jacking", account takeovers, mining fraud, and scams against initial coin offerings (ICOs) have all grown more common, the report said.</p> <p>In crypto jacking, cybercriminals secretly take over another computer user's browser and use it to fraudulently mine or create cryptocurrencies, according to Digital Shadows' report. Miners use special software to solve math problems and are issued a certain number of bitcoins or cryptocurrencies in exchange.</p> <p>Crypto Jacker software allows users to clone popular websites and initiate spam campaigns.</p> <p>The cybersecurity company said criminals also perpetrate mining fraud using botnets, collections of internet-connected devices, which may include PCs, servers, and mobile devices that are infected and controlled by a common type of malware. Users are often unaware a botnet has infected their system.</p> <p>Botnets were first used to mine bitcoin in 2014. The process was too complex to be financially viable, but botnets have made a comeback because newer cryptocurrencies like Monero are easier to "mine", Digital Shadows said.</p> <p>The company said botnets could be rented for \$40. It said one such offering had "flown off the shelves" with almost 2,000 rentals so far.</p> <p>Cybercriminals have also been drawn to the surging initial coin offering market, the report said. ICOs have raised roughly \$5 billion for various startups and projects in 2017, according to data from Crunchbase.</p>

That is up exponentially from just \$100 million in 2016.

Rather than selling scam tokens, criminals target legitimate currencies, either by stealing funds from ICOs or by manipulating prices through the type of "pump and dump" schemes often used with penny stocks and other less-liquid assets, the report said.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

Terror Conditions

[Top of page](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Slow death of al-Qaeda in Algeria
SOURCE	http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/analysis-slow-death-al-qaeda-algeria-143324001
GIST	<p>ALGIERS - It was an admission from the very top: his men were on the run or dead, popular support was almost zero, and allies across North Africa had fallen silent. Algeria was a dead zone for al-Qaeda, admitted its chief in northern Africa.</p> <p>In his April 2017 interview for Inspire, the propaganda sheet of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, Abdelmalek Droukdel, the "emir" of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, or AQIM, painted a sorry picture.</p> <p>"Support for the cause is generally good, with the exception of the Algerian front," he said.</p> <p>"We are bogged down in a long war. The Algerian front suffers from scarcity, and sometimes an almost complete lack of support - inside and out.</p> <p>"This has had a terrible impact."</p> <p>Little did he realise things would get worse. The rank-and-file was being thinned by repeated attacks by the Algerian army, but more costly was the loss of many of its executive branch.</p> <p>Bilel Kobi, the special envoy of Droukdel in Tunisia, and Bashir Ben Neji, emir of a group in Tunisia, were shot dead by the Tunisian military in January, In Algeria this week, Abu Rouaha al-Qassantini - real name Adel Seghiri - was killed by the Algerian army in Jijel, about 400km from Algiers.</p> <p>He was the propaganda chief of AQIM, creator of the al-Andalus magazine and mastermind of the propaganda forum "Ifriquya al-Islamiyah" (Islamic Africa), which acted as message board between groups in the region and al-Qaeda in the Middle East.</p> <p>Documents, a telephone and computer equipment found after his death proved invaluable material for the security services. Much of his network was compromised.</p> <p>"He was among the 15 most dangerous AQIM fighters," an Algerian security source told Middle East Eye. "Not for his actions in the field but because he was in charge of encrypting and decrypting the information."</p> <p>Born in 1971 in Constantine, Qassantini gained an electronic engineering degree in 1994 before joining the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) and later the notorious Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) in 2002.</p> <p>"It is thought that he has probably continued to train in encryption practices through the internet," said one of the Algerian investigators who handled his case.</p> <p>"Undoubtedly, it's a blow for the organisation and it will be weakened."</p> <p>By law, Algerian military officials - both active and retired - are forbidden to speak to the media and Middle East Eye is unable to quote them by name. But all those who spoke have said the fight against al-</p>

Qaeda and its allies, after several years of setbacks, has swung decisively in the favour of the Algerian state.

AQIM has failed to carry out major attacks in Algeria for several months. The Algerian army says it eliminates an average of 200 militants each year and armed groups are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain their numbers.

So much so that last October, according to an Algerian security source, militant leaders pleaded for reinforcements from its allies in Tunisia and Libya.

How can the change in fortunes be explained? According to a retired Algerian major general, the state is "reaping the benefits of an anti-terrorism policy it has been pursuing for more than 20 years".

"This terrorism, we have always understood as both a security problem but also psychological, economic and cultural," he said.

Military operations, he said, were being run in tandem with efforts to marginalise armed groups' influence on the population.

As a result, "an almost complete absence of support inside", to use Droukdel's expression, is now manifest.

This was evident in 2015, when Madani Merzag, the former "emir" of a group known as the Islamic Salvation Army, a group notorious in the 1990s for a series of massacres, tried to form a political party. His attempt was roundly rejected by Algerians.

"There is no a secret recipe," said the retired general. "Eliminating a terrorist is not a victory if, at the same time, a recruit rises to take their place."

"We fail if [armed groups] are allowed to mobilise the youth. Draining terrorist financing can be an endless thing if you do not target their support networks."

A counter-terrorism source said: "The other mainstay of the security services has been to hit terrorist logistics.

"Some 1,000 members of support networks have been arrested in the last three years. For them, it is a real disaster that has forced dozens of terrorists and their families to surrender to the authorities. "

The tactics have not been received positively by all. NGOs are critical of Algeria's military tactics, and say regular announcements about the "elimination of terrorists" are opaque, and show there is no effort made to bring militants to justice.

But there is international support. In October, the deputy coordinator of the US State Department's counter-terrorism office called on Algeria "to share this experience with other countries around the world".

The tactics have had significant impacts as, according to an army analyst, militants have decided that "rather than fighting a far superior enemy, they would be better off moving elsewhere - Tunisia and especially Libya".

But AQIM is not dead yet. In the south, in the Sahel, the situation is much different.

Thanks to strong alliances and money made from the ransom business, the organisation is able to sustain itself even in the face of pressure from an international force, known as Operation Barkhane, led by French soldiers.

Faced with the vastness of the desert and difficult weather conditions, the contingent that makes up the Barkhane force barely contain the attacks of AQIM under the unified banner of the Support Group for

<p>Return to Top</p>	<p>Islam and Muslims in the Islamic Maghreb.</p> <p>An Algerian security source solicited by MEE admits: "From an operational point of view, AQIM is in bad shape. I cannot over-emphasise how the elimination of Abu Rouaha al-Qassantini has hurt them."</p> <p>He added that the Algerian army would soon flush out Droukdel, who is presumed to be hiding in the mountains of the Jijel region.</p> <p>"But as long as AQIM has fighters, it remains a threat. We must never forget the story of Abdelhakim Belhadj's Islamic Fighting Group.</p> <p>"It was said to have been completely destroyed but from 2011 was to reconstitute itself and fan out to several cities of the country."</p>
--------------------------------------	---

HEADLINE	02/01 Guilty plea in false terror threats
SOURCE	http://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/index.ssf/2018/02/clackamas_man_made_false_threa.html
GIST	<p>A Clackamas man Thursday pleaded guilty to placing calls to two airports in Nevada and Texas, reporting his father and brother as terrorists because they got an invitation to a family wedding and he didn't.</p> <p>Sonny Donnie Smith, 38, admitted to placing anonymous phone calls to security offices at McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas and the Midland International Air and Space Port in Midland, Texas. He falsely claimed that his father and brother were terrorists traveling through the airports, according to prosecutors.</p> <p>Both calls were made Sept. 3, 2016, Assistant U.S. Attorney Hannah Horsley said.</p> <p>The calls prompted an FBI investigation that revealed no terrorist threats. Smith's father and brother were temporarily detained and questioned by investigators as a result, and the brother missed his flight that day.</p> <p>The calls resulted from a family feud, according to court documents. Sonny Smith made the threatening calls because he was told he wasn't welcome at a family wedding they were heading to, according to the plea agreement.</p> <p>"Thanks to the FBI agents and partner agencies who worked this case, Mr. Smith quickly found his harassment was far from anonymous," said Loren Cannon, Oregon's FBI special agent in charge.</p> <p>Smith faces a maximum sentence of two years in prison, a \$250,000 fine and one year of supervised release. He's set to be sentenced May 10.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 Groups: ancient Syria temple bombed
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/ancient-syrian-temple-reduced-rubble-airstrike-syrian-government/story?id=52765093
GIST	<p>The world has lost another valuable piece of ancient heritage.</p> <p>More than 50 percent of the remains of a Syrian temple built 3,000 years ago was destroyed in a Turkish air strike on Jan. 29, according to the Syrian antiquities ministry and the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an independent watchdog.</p> <p>The temple at Ain Dara was constructed by an early Iron Age society and was one of Syria's most</p>

	<p>important monuments. It was famous for its well-preserved lions and sphinxes that were intricately carved from basalt stone.</p> <p>Photos published by the Syrian Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums show the site before and after Monday's bombing. Many of the statues have been reduced to piles of rubble.</p> <p>Air strikes against Ain Dara and several other protected areas nearby caused outrage among locals, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. People living in the area "accused the Turkish forces of an attempt to eliminate the archeological sites that represent the civilizations in the area of Afrin," the group said.</p> <p>A Turkish military official told The Associated Press the airstrikes did not target religious or cultural sites. The official spoke on condition of anonymity in line with military rules, according to the AP. The extent of the damage to the temple could not be independently assessed but the Observatory said it was badly damaged, the AP reported.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 Afghan official: US drone kills 26 Taliban
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/official-us-drone-kills-26-taliban-eastern-afghanistan-52767195?
GIST	<p>An Afghan official says two U.S. drone strikes this week hit a building where dozens of Taliban were meeting in southeastern province of Ghazni, killing 26 insurgents and wounding 22.</p> <p>Arif Noori, a provincial spokesman, says the drone assault was carried out on Tuesday during an offensive in Ghazni province's Andar district where the U.S. military came to the aid of Afghan security forces battling the Taliban.</p> <p>He says among those killed was a senior commander, known only as Aqhani, who ran the insurgency in Ghazni province. The first U.S. drone strike hit the building, the second struck an hour later after more Taliban had gathered at the scene.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 Turkey bombs families into caves
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/01/middleeast/syria-kurds-assault-civilians-intl/index.html
GIST	<p>(CNN)Kurdish families huddle on blankets in a dimly lit cave. Others hide in the rubble of a bombed-out building, gathered around a campfire. Those that have basements seek shelter there.</p> <p>This is life in Afrin.</p> <p>Turkey's cross-border military offensive against US-backed Kurdish militias has driven civilians living in the northwestern Syrian enclave underground. An estimated 16,000 people have been displaced by the fighting, which has been punctuated by relentless airstrikes and shelling, according to the United Nations.</p> <p>Footage obtained exclusively by CNN captures the city's deserted streets -- littered with crumpled cars, debris and gaping holes where shops once stood.</p> <p>"We don't know where to go," says Mohammed Khaled, 10, speaking in Kurdish.</p> <p>"The airplane has been dropping bombs for five days now. They are dropping missiles and bombs. My dad says not to go out because of the war planes and so we are sleeping in the huts. All our homes are destroyed."</p>

Khaled stands outside one of the structures where civilians are seeking shelter. Children mill around behind him, restless. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), families have been prevented from leaving the area by local authorities. The humanitarian organization has had to suspend child protection services there amid the violence.

Um Muhammed, Khaled's mother, asks why Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is bombing her people.

"What did we do to him?" she says in Arabic.

"We lost our homes our children, nothing is left ... why would this happen to us? Is not this a shame that children have to live like that? We are human beings, are we not? Why are they doing this to us?"

Afrin has borne the brunt of Turkey's attacks since January 20, when Ankara launched Operation Olive Branch to remove Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) and ISIS militants from the area along its border.

The military operations have predominately targeted Kurdish fighters of the People's Protection Units, or YPG. The militia, which has been critical to the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in the fight against ISIS, is viewed by Ankara as a terrorist organization.

Turkey sees the quest by the Kurds -- who are spread out in Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq -- to establish an independent homeland as an existential threat to its territorial integrity. And Turkey has long warned that it will not tolerate YPG control of much of its border with Syria.

Hevi Mustafa, the co-president of the executive council of Afrin, praises the resolve and confidence of the forces fighting the onslaught.

Mustafa calls the Turkish attacks "barbaric" and says she hopes the international community will hold the Turkish government accountable for the violence.

Turkey views the YPG as indistinguishable from the PKK and says those entities have been hiding out in Afrin since Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's regime left in 2012.

According to the Turkish General Staff, the operation is being carried out under the framework of Turkey's rights based on international law. The military also says avoiding civilian casualties is of the "utmost importance."

"Only the terrorists and their shelters, barracks, weapons, tools and equipment are targeted, and all kinds of attention and sensitivity are shown to avoid damage to civilian/innocent people and to the environment," the Turkish Armed Forces said in a statement.

The people hiding in Afrin's caves have a different view.

One woman asks, "What are the planes wanting from us? What are they bombing us for? What do they want from us and what do they want from the little children?"

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/02 Turkey: rocket attacks from Syria enclave
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/world/2018/02/02/turkey-rocket-attacks-from-syrian-enclave-wound-9-people.html
GIST	ANKARA, Turkey – Turkish media say nine people were wounded in a barrage of rockets fired at two border towns in Turkey across from the Syrian Kurdish enclave of Afrin.

	<p>The state-run Anadolu Agency says three rockets targeted the town of Reyhanli in Hatay province on Friday, hitting a house, a road close to a marketplace and the outer wall of a workplace. Six people were hospitalized from that attack.</p> <p>Governor Mehmet Tekinarslan says three more rockets hit the town of Kilis, northeast of Reyhanli, where at least three people were wounded.</p> <p>Ankara launched a cross-border offensive into Afrin on Jan. 20 to rout the Syrian Kurdish militia it says is linked to insurgents fighting inside Turkey.</p> <p>At least four people have been killed in rocket attacks on the two towns since then.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 Airstrikes Yemen dramatically jump
SOURCE	https://www.nbcnews.com/news/mideast/u-s-airstrikes-yemen-have-increased-sixfold-under-trump-n843886
GIST	<p>The U.S. military stepped up its air campaign in Yemen dramatically in 2017, conducting more than six times as many airstrikes as in 2016, according to U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) data.</p> <p>In addition to the airstrikes, the Pentagon acknowledges there is now a small intermittent U.S. military presence inside Yemen.</p> <p>In 2017, the U.S. military carried out 131 airstrikes, both manned and unmanned, against al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIS in Yemen, the data shows. That's up from 21 strikes in 2016, the last year of the Obama administration. There have been at least 10 additional strikes since Jan. 1, 2018.</p> <p>The airstrikes were carried out by drones, AC-130 gunships and fighter-bombers.</p> <p>A senior U.S. intelligence official said the increased level of activity "has killed fighters, eviscerated AQAP's propaganda network, cut off external support and enabled UAE partners to regain territory."</p> <p>The official confirmed an earlier U.S. military report that more than 50 ISIS fighters were killed in one October raid alone.</p> <p>The increase is the result of a policy change made by President Trump almost immediately after taking office in January 2017.</p> <p>Soon after the Trump administration took office, it declared parts of Yemen as well as neighboring Somalia to be "areas of active hostilities," giving the U.S. military more leeway to target terrorists from the air and on the ground without White House approval.</p> <p>Initially, the Pentagon operated off a target list developed during the transition between the Obama and Trump administrations. That target list focused almost exclusively on AQAP. Some additional strikes were conducted in support of counterterrorism operations by the special forces of the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, according to a senior intelligence official. As the year progressed, both air and ground strikes increased.</p> <p>By October, the U.S. military counterterrorism operations grew to include strikes and missions against ISIS, specifically a regional group called ISIS-Yemen (ISIS-Y). CENTCOM spokesperson Lt. Col. Earl Brown said in December that targeting ISIS "is required to prevent ISIS-Y from filling the vacuum left by a diminished AQAP footprint or influence in the region."</p> <p>Despite that, a U.S. intelligence estimate contends that ISIS-Y doubled in size in 2017.</p>

In December, CENTCOM acknowledged that the U.S. military had conducted "multiple ground operations" in Yemen in 2017, but did not provide a specific number or details about the raids.

Asked how many U.S. forces are stationed in Yemen, a spokesperson declined to provide details.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE 02/01 Wave of attacks rock Afghanistan

SOURCE <http://time.com/5126270/terrorist-attacks-afghanistan-taliban-isis/?xid=homepage>

GIST About 90-minutes before dawn broke on Jan. 28, Kabul residents woke to the sound of explosions and gunfire. A group of insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades and automatic rifles had stormed an army post near a military academy in Afghanistan's capital.

Monday's pre-dawn raid lasted an hour and ended in the death of 11 soldiers, as well as four of the five militants who instigated it. It was the fourth brazen attack in a little over a week that saw more than 140 people killed in around Kabul and exposed gaping holes in Afghanistan's security structure.

For many, the four atrocities—two claimed by the Taliban and two by a local ISIS affiliate—also underscore the futility of a 16-year United States military campaign (the longest war America has been involved in). Despite a threefold increase in aerial ordinance dropped on the Taliban in 2017, the insurgent group made considerable territorial gains and is now openly active in 70% of Afghanistan, according to a recent BBC study.

For all the talk of the Taliban resurgence in the countryside, the latest spate of attacks shows that urban spaces remain highly vulnerable and lay bare the intelligence gathering frailty of the country's Western-backed government, says Michael Kugelman, an Afghanistan specialist at the Wilson Center.

"Afghanistan simply is in no position to preempt large-scale attacks, even in supposedly more highly secured areas," Kugelman tells TIME.

Here's more.

What did insurgent groups target in the latest wave of violence?

On January 20, Taliban fighters in suicide vests laid siege to Kabul's Intercontinental Hotel, killing more than 20 people over the course of a 13 hour-long gun battle. At least 14 foreigners, including four Americans, were among the dead, according to the U.S. State Department. The Taliban struck again on January 27. This time the death toll breached 100 after attacker blew up an explosives-laden ambulance on a busy Kabul street.

Five day after the Taliban hit Kabul's Intercontinental, suicide bombers and gunmen attacked the Jalalabad offices of international NGO Save the Children, about 100 miles east of downtown Kabul. "Incidents like this have a direct impact on the children and communities we work to protect and yesterday programs across the country were brought to a halt," Save the Children said in a statement confirming a fourth member of its staff had died after the attack.

That attack, as well as the Jan 28 assault on the military outpost, was claimed by local ISIS affiliate Islamic State Khurasan (ISK).

The brazen nature of the assaults—and the way in which they came in such quick succession—has thrust Afghanistan back into the headlines. Sadly, it is never far from them. A little more than a month ago ISK claimed responsibility for killing 41 people at a Shia cultural center; in May last year a truck bomb near Kabul's presidential palace killed more than 150 people, the majority of them civilians.

Is the insurgency entering a bloodier phase?

It depends on who you ask. Responding to reporters questions about how attackers penetrated ostensibly

	<p>well-defended urban sites with apparent ease, the head of Afghanistan’s spy agency Mohammad Masoom Stanekzai said that the terrorists were “changing their tactics,” according to Agence France Presse.</p> <p>The ambulance attack in the city center did “not mean a lapse (in security). We have foiled many attacks but some are difficult to control,” Stanekzai said.</p> <p>However, Taliban-led campaigns of violence in cities have long accompanied the group’s advances in the countryside.</p> <p>What has changed is the insurgents’ willingness to claim responsibility for attacks targeted at civilians, rather than police and the military. That is likely a product of the insurgents’ desire to heap pressure on the state that it wishes to overthrow.</p> <p>Says Kugelman: “[The Taliban] wants to make the state look weak, and what better way of doing so than making it clear that the state is unable to protect its own people?”</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Turkey-backed forces push into enclave
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/turkey-calls-french-warning-syria-insult-52760517
GIST	<p>Intense battles raged Thursday as Kurdish fighters attempted to repel a new advance by Turkish troops and allied Syrian fighters on their encircled enclave in northwestern Syria.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Syrian government forces pushed into Idlib province, an opposition stronghold nearby, inching closer to a key highway that connects Syria's two largest cities, Damascus and Aleppo.</p> <p>The separate offensives have sharply worsened the humanitarian situation in northern Syria. Some 15,000 civilians have been displaced inside the Kurdish-controlled enclave Afrin, with no place to run except the district's center, according to U.N. humanitarian adviser Jan Egeland. The figure could not be independently verified.</p> <p>The U.N. says more than 270,000 have been displaced in Idlib because of the government onslaught since Dec. 15.</p> <p>Turkey has mobilized some 10,000 Syrian opposition fighters to fight in its campaign against a Kurdish militant group in Afrin. That campaign, codenamed Operation Olive Branch, has drawn protest from the U.S. and France, who consider the Kurdish militia an ally in the war on the Islamic State group.</p> <p>Turkey's state-run Anadolu news agency said the Turkish military cleared Bulbul, an area north of Afrin, Thursday. But the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said that while the Turkish troops and allied Syrian fighters have reached Bulbul, "crushing" battles were continuing with the Kurdish fighters.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 London: van driver convicted in attack
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/01/europe/london-finsbury-park-mosque-attack-intl/index.html
GIST	<p>(CNN)A man who deliberately drove a van into a group of Muslims near a mosque in north London in June was convicted Thursday of murder and attempted murder.</p> <p>Darren Osborne, 48, appeared to have been motivated by anger over Islamist terror attacks in London and Manchester, England, in 2017 and a child grooming scandal in Rochdale that involved men of Asian origin, Woolwich Crown Court in southeast London was told.</p> <p>He rented a van in Wales and drove it to London on June 18 planning to attack people attending a march,</p>

the Crown Prosecution Service said in a statement after the verdict.

When that did not prove possible, he drove around the city looking for a mosque, it said.

Just after midnight, he saw a group of Muslims helping 51-year-old Makram Ali, who had collapsed at an intersection. More people were around than usual because it was Ramadan, and many Muslims were on their way to or from prayers, the Crown Prosecution Service said.

According to the prosecution, Osborne deliberately drove his vehicle into the group near Finsbury Park Mosque, fatally injuring Ali and trying to kill as many others as he could. Nine others were taken to the hospital with injuries in the attack.

A witness told the court that when Osborne was stopped from fleeing by members of the public, he said: "I've done my job, you can kill me now."

In his defense, Osborne claimed that a man named "Dave" had been driving the van and was responsible for the attack. But he was unable to explain why closed-circuit TV showed only one man leaving the van, the prosecution said.

Osborne will be sentenced at a later date.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

Suspicious, Unusual

[Top of page](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Filmmaker: D.B. Cooper case solved
SOURCE	https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2018/feb/1/filmmaker-claims-he-has-solved-db-cooper-case/
GIST	<p>A documentary filmmaker claims he has solved the D.B Cooper hijacking case.</p> <p>Tom Colbert, whose 40-member investigative team has spent years probing the 1971 hijacking, alleged that Cooper is a CIA operative whose identity has been covered up by the FBI.</p> <p>He also claims that Cooper is Robert W. Rackstraw, a 74-year-old former army paratrooper who is living in the San Diego area.</p> <p>“Our criminal investigation is finished,” Mr. Colbert said at a Tuesday morning press conference in front of the FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C.</p> <p>Mr. Rackstraw could not be reached for comment. But Dennis Williams, an attorney who represents Mr. Rackstraw, denied the allegation that his client is the notorious criminal.</p> <p>“He says he’s not D.B. Cooper and I don’t believe he is,” Mr. Williams said accusing Mr. Colbert of “harassing” his client.</p> <p>D.B., or Dan Cooper, hijacked Northwest Orient Flight 305 in November 1971. He jumped off the plane somewhere over the Pacific Northwest after collecting \$200,000 in ransom. He disappeared and the FBI concluded he died while jumping out of the airplane.</p> <p>In 2016, the agency closed the investigation.</p> <p>Over the years various suspects have emerged but there has never been conclusive evidence linking anyone to the crime.</p> <p>Now Mr. Colbert claims he has conclusive evidence linking Mr. Rackstraw to Cooper. Mr. Colbert claims he has discovered codes in five letters someone claiming to be Cooper mailed to the FBI. He alleges that</p>

the code refers to three Army units connected to Rackstraw during his service in Vietnam. Mr. Rackstraw is the only person connected to all three units, Mr. Colbert alleged.

“The only soldier that had these three units is Robert W. Rackstraw,” Mr. Colbert said. “That confirmed it for us.”

Among the codes inserted at the bottom of the letters, include the initials SWS, which stands for Special Warfare School, according to Mr. Colbert. In another letter, Cooper claims to be CIA and includes the letters RWR. That stands for Robert W. Rackstraw, Mr. Colbert said.

Mr. Colbert alleged that Mr. Rackstraw worked for the CIA and the agency pressured the FBI to look the other way, enabling Mr. Rackstraw to avoid capture. There are 17 examples linking Mr. Rackstraw to the CIA — including evidence he was in Iran during the 1978 fall of the Shah and played a role in the Iran-Contra affair — Mr. Colbert alleged.

An FBI spokeswoman said it was “inappropriate” to comment about Mr. Colbert’s allegations.

“The FBI continues to receive tips from members of the public, but none to date have resulted in a definitive identification of the hijacker,” FBI spokeswoman Ayn S. Dietrich-Williams said. “The tips have conveyed plausible theories, descriptive information about individuals potentially matching the hijacker, and anecdotes—to include accounts of sudden, unexplained wealth. In order to solve a case, the FBI must prove culpability beyond a reasonable doubt, and, unfortunately, none of the well-meaning tips or applications of new investigative technology have yielded the necessary proof.”

[Return to Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Australian government secrets revealed
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2018/01/31/asia/australia-cabinet-papers-leaked-intl/index.html
GIST	<p>(CNN) — Australian intelligence officers have delivered safes to two offices of the country's national broadcaster to secure top secret Cabinet documents that were accidentally sold in second-hand furniture.</p> <p>The Australian government is investigating the discovery of thousands of files, dating back 10 years and spanning five governments, in filing drawers at a furniture store in the Australian capital of Canberra.</p> <p>The documents were obtained by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), which has called the discovery "one of the biggest breaches of Cabinet security in Australian history."</p> <p>The Prime Minister's department confirmed the documents were "secured" in the early hours of Thursday morning, but stressed the delivery of the safes at 1 a.m. "was not a raid."</p> <p>Later Thursday, security agency personnel visited the ABC's Melbourne office to secure documents inside a safe, the broadcaster said.</p> <p>ABC News director Gaven Morris said the organization had worked with Australian security agencies to make sure the documents were secure.</p> <p>The ABC reported that it still has access to the files, and talks are underway with the government about how to proceed.</p> <p>The existence of the documents and their unlikely discovery was revealed by ABC Wednesday in a series of shock articles.</p> <p>Among the revelations reported by the ABC from the documents were allegations Australia's then-immigration minister Scott Morrison intervened in 2013 to demand extra checks on a group of asylum seekers to stop them getting permanent protection visas in Australia.</p>

Former Prime Minister John Howard's government was also alleged to have discussed removing Australians' right to remain silent in custody around 2007, according to ABC reporting.

Former Australian leader John Howard's government was one of those whose documents were contained in the cabinet.

The Cabinet is the top decision making body in a parliamentary system, composed of the prime minister and his or her most senior ministers.

All discussions inside Cabinet are considered confidential and documents on Australian Cabinet decisions are supposed to remain confidential for at least to 20 years.

A number of other prominent Australian leaders were also the target of embarrassing domestic allegations, including former Prime Ministers Kevin Rudd and Tony Abbott.

Abbott told Sydney radio station 2GB someone needed to "pay a price" over the blunder.

"If you are going to throw out a filing cabinet that has got a whole lot of sensitive and confidential information in it you have got to make sure it is empty before it goes out of the building," he said Wednesday.

Rudd announced early Thursday morning he would be suing the ABC one of their articles published based on his government's controversial home insulation scheme, describing it as "a lie."

According to the ABC, the two sets of drawers were sold at a second-hand furniture store in an undisclosed neighborhood in Canberra. They were both locked and no set of keys was provided with them.

They were eventually bought and left unopened until the purchaser used a drill to break off the locks. The ABC did not identify who bought the drawers and how the documents found their way to the news organization.

In an interview on ABC television Wednesday night, Australia's opposition Labor Party leader Bill Shorten said the situation was "absurd."

"I mean all these spies who are meant to be spying on us they should just be going shopping in second-hand furniture stores in Canberra," he said.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Mystery: 1lb. meth delivered to doorstep
SOURCE	http://komonews.com/news/local/package-containing-pound-of-meth-shows-up-on-skyway-couples-doorstep
GIST	<p>SKYWAY, Wash. -- A Skyway couple that found a package filled with methamphetamine on their doorstep is trying to figure out who sent it to their home.</p> <p>"I was home, and I heard a knock on the door," the woman who lives at the home told KOMO News.</p> <p>The contents of the package she and her husband found on their doorstep has left them worried about revealing their identities.</p> <p>The box, which was addressed to their Skyway home, arrived last Thursday.</p> <p>Digging through layers of tissue inside revealed a can containing a package that was sealed in bubble wrap.</p>

"As soon as I started pulling out the bubble wrap, it occurred to me that this is ... this has to be some sort of drugs," the woman said. "I put it back in the box, and I told my husband, 'This is up to you now.'"

She immediately stopped and waited for her husband to come home to inspect it further, she said.

The couple called sheriff's deputies, who confirmed through tests that the package indeed contained about a pound of meth.

The address listed on the box was the couple's address. But no one recognized the name it was shipped to, including the couple's current paying house guests.

"To know that somebody is probably casing out your house waiting for this package, and then now the package has gone missing ... it was a no-brainer to go to the cops," the man said.

The King County Sheriff's Office has now launched an investigation to figure out who sent the package, a spokeswoman told KOMO News.

A return address lists Palmdale, California, so deputies plan to work with police there to see if they can track down the sender, she added.

"We don't have a rash of these," said King County Sheriff's Sgt. Cindi West. "In fact, we couldn't think of any other instances anytime recently in the last few years where we've had anything even close to this."

[Return to Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Jail inmate death under investigation
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/crime/death-of-snohomish-county-jail-inmate-under-investigation-2/
GIST	<p>Snohomish County sheriff's deputies are investigating the death of a 62-year-old inmate at Snohomish County Jail in Everett.</p> <p>A corrections deputy discovered the woman needing medical help in her cell around 2:30 p.m. Thursday, the sheriff's office said in a news release.</p> <p>The deputy called medics and began CPR, the release says, but life-saving attempts by jail staff and first responders were unsuccessful. Authorities pronounced the woman dead at the scene.</p> <p>The release does not describe the nature of the woman's symptoms.</p> <p>Everett police booked the woman, whom the Snohomish County Medical Examiner's Office will formally identify, into the jail on Jan. 19 on suspicion of second-degree domestic violence and criminal trespassing. The sheriff's office described her as transient.</p> <p>Medical staff initially "declined to accept the inmate for pre-existing medical conditions" and sent her to Providence Regional Medical Center, the release says. There, staff cleared her for jail booking.</p> <p>Detectives from the sheriff's office's Major Crime Unit are investigating her death, per standard protocol, the release says. Separately, health professionals will review the woman's death "from a clinical standpoint."</p> <p>The medical examiner's office will determine her manner and cause of death.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Small town awash w/prescription pills
SOURCE	https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/welcome-williamson-w-va-where-there-are-6-500-opioid-n843821
GIST	<p>WILLIAMSON, West Virginia — The deadly math in this struggling but proud West Virginia town breaks down like this: For over a decade, two pharmacies just four blocks apart dispensed some 20.8 million prescription painkillers in a town of just 3,191 residents.</p> <p>That’s more than 6,500 prescription painkillers per person in this coal-mining town that sits just across the Tug Fork River from Kentucky.</p> <p>Those jarring figures were released this week by the congressional committee investigating the epidemic that has ravaged the Rust Belt — and the two regional drug wholesalers, Miami-Luken and H.D. Smith, that are accused of swamping Williamson with millions of highly addictive opioid pills.</p> <p>The doctors and drug wholesalers are “making a fortune off of our downfall, you know,” recovering addict Wes Thomasson told NBC News on Thursday at a Williamson treatment center.</p> <p>“If you’re trying to figure out how to get rid of the epidemic, trying to figure out how to resolve the problem, start with the prescription,” he said.</p> <p>That’s exactly what the House Energy and Commerce Committee is doing.</p> <p>“These numbers are outrageous, and we will get to the bottom of how this destruction was able to be unleashed across West Virginia,” the committee chairman, Rep. Greg Walden, R-Ore., and ranking member, Rep. Frank Pallone, D-N.J., vowed in a joint statement.</p> <p>Last year there were 13 fatal drug overdoses in Mingo County, of which Williamson is the county seat, and 711 deaths from drugs in the 54 other counties that make up the state, according to the West Virginia Health Statistics Center.</p> <p>Other recovering addicts, like Deiana Warrix and Mindy Leffe, said that Williamson feels awash with opioids.</p> <p>“If you want it you can get it,” Warrix said. “You go to the pharmacy and you get five prescriptions of it.”</p> <p>She added, “It’s just not right, really.”</p> <p>Attorney Mike Troy, who represents Williamson and Mingo County in its legal battle with drug wholesalers, said even he was taken aback by the sheer number of painkillers in the town.</p> <p>“You can’t live and breathe and not be shocked by the numbers,” Troy said. “But you also can’t live in these communities and really be all that amazed when you see how it touches every family, you know? I mean, there’s none of us that don’t have a family member who’s addicted, in treatment, and homeless. It’s just all-consuming in these communities.”</p> <p>In 2016, West Virginia had the nation’s highest fatal drug overdose rate with 52 per 100,000 people, far out pacing Ohio, which had 39.1 fatalities per 100,000 people, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.</p> <p>West Virginia was also one of the states with the highest rates of opioid prescriptions, according to the CDC.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/02 New Zealand: January hottest ever
----------	--

SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/january-hottest-month-recorded-zealand-52783475?
GIST	<p>January was the hottest month ever recorded in New Zealand according to figures released Friday, and experts say climate change is one factor.</p> <p>The heat has led to a shortage of fans that Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern jokingly referred to as "fan-ageddon." Ardern said that while many people are probably enjoying a great summer, they also need to consider the long-term consequences of climate change, including sea-level rise.</p> <p>Figures released by the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research indicate the average temperature during January was 20.3 degrees Celsius (68.5 Fahrenheit). That was more than 3 degrees Celsius above normal and beat the previous record of 19.6 Celsius set in February 1998.</p> <p>Record-keeping began in 1909.</p> <p>Gregor Macara, a climate scientist with the weather agency, said that warmer seas, generally settled weather and more winds from the tropical north had led to the higher temperatures. He said climate change was an underlying and contributing factor.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Cuba: Fidel Castro son kills self
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/cuba-state-media-fidel-castros-son-killed-52780887?cid=clicksource_76_2_hero_headlines_bsq_hed
GIST	<p>The oldest son of late Cuban leader Fidel Castro killed himself on Thursday after months of treatment for depression, state media reported. He was 68.</p> <p>Official website Cubadebate said Fidel Castro Diaz-Balart had been in a "deeply depressed state." A brief note read on state television said his treatment had "required an initial hospitalization then outpatient follow-up."</p> <p>The oldest son of Cuba's late revolutionary leader was known for his resemblance to his father, earning him the nickname Fidelito or Little Fidel.</p> <p>Castro Diaz-Balart studied nuclear physics in the former Soviet Union and served as scientific adviser to Cuba's Council of State. He was vice president of the Cuban Academy of Sciences. He previously led its nuclear program.</p> <p>Castro Diaz-Balart was born to Fidel Castro's first wife, Mirta Diaz-Balart, a woman from Cuba's aristocracy who Fidel married in his youth before beginning the revolutionary struggle that later brought him and his brother Raul to power.</p> <p>Because of his maternal lineage, Castro Diaz-Balart is cousin to Republican Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, who represents Cuban exiles in Florida.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Baby milk contamination 'began in 2005'
SOURCE	http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-42908706
GIST	<p>The French dairy group at the centre of a baby milk scandal, Lactalis, has admitted some of its products may have been tainted over more than a decade.</p> <p>Millions of boxes of powdered milk have been recalled worldwide following a salmonella outbreak last year.</p>

	<p>Researchers say that the exact same strain of salmonella was responsible for another outbreak in 2005.</p> <p>The company said it was possible other babies could have been affected by Lactalis products since then.</p> <p>In a newspaper interview published on Thursday, Lactalis CEO Emmanuel Besnier said tests had shown that a factory at the centre of the latest scare, in Craon in north-western France, was also responsible for the 2005 outbreak.</p> <p>The factory - owned by Lactalis since 2006 - was closed in December after it emerged that contamination had started in one of its drying towers.</p> <p>In the 2005 outbreak, 146 children fell ill. In last year's outbreak, at least 38 cases in France and Spain were traced to Lactalis milk.</p> <p>On Thursday, researchers from the Pasteur Institute in Paris said the salmonella bacteria had remained at the Craon factory until it was closed.</p> <p>As a result, they said, a total of 25 babies had been affected between 2005 and 2016.</p> <p>Mr Besnier appeared to point to a similar conclusion in his interview with Les Échos newspaper.</p> <p>"The possibility that babies consumed tainted milk over this period cannot be ruled out," he said.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 US: Syria developing chem. weapons
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/syria-may-be-making-new-types-of-chemical-weapons-u-s-says/
GIST	<p>WASHINGTON -- Syrian President Bashar Assad's government may be developing new, more sophisticated chemical weapons, the Trump administration says. The characteristics of recent alleged attacks suggest Syria is producing chemical weapons despite a 2013 deal to destroy its program, according to officials, who say it's "highly likely" that Syria kept a stockpile of weapons.</p> <p>The officials also say Syria may be making new kinds of weapons, either to improve their military capability or to escape international accountability.</p> <p>The officials also say the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) keeps using chemical weapons such as sulfur mustard and chlorine. The militants are using shells or improvised explosive devices to deliver the chemicals, according to the officials.</p> <p>The officials weren't authorized to discuss the assessment on the record and briefed reporters on condition of anonymity.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 United tightens support animal rules
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/united-airlines-changes-policy-on-comfort-animals-after-peacock-incident/
GIST	<p>DALLAS -- United Airlines wants to see more paperwork before passengers fly with emotional-support animals -- and don't even try to bring a peacock on board. The airline announced Thursday it will tighten rules starting March 1. The changes are similar to those coming at Delta Air Lines.</p> <p>United said owners will have to confirm that their animal is trained to behave in public, and they will need a vaccination form signed by a veterinarian. The vet will have to vouch that the animal isn't a health or safety threat to other people.</p>

"United has seen a 75 percent year-over-year increase in customers bringing emotional support animals onboard and has experienced a significant increase in onboard incidents involving these animals," the airline said in a statement. "We understand that other carriers have seen similar trends. The Department of Transportation's rules regarding emotional support animals are not working as they were intended, and we need to change our approach in order to ensure a safe and pleasant travel experience for all of our customers."

The airline bounced a passenger on Sunday who showed up at the airport with a peacock for emotional support. New York City-based photographer and performance artist Ventiko said she bought a ticket for her peacock, Dexter, so he would have his own seat on Sunday's flight from New Jersey's Newark Liberty International Airport to Los Angeles.

United already bans exotic animals and non-household birds. Still, the fact that a passenger tried to bring a peacock on board "helped illustrate why we needed to revise our policy," United spokesman Charles Hobart said.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

Crime, Criminals

[Top of page](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Sex ring moved hundreds of women
SOURCE	https://www.seattlepi.com/seattlenews/article/Sex-ring-moved-hundreds-of-women-through-12545043.php
GIST	<p>Zhaofeng “Brandon” Zhang was the kind of new arrival to Seattle who seemed to have everything going for him.</p> <p>At 18, Zhang landed in the United States from China and enrolled in the University of Washington to study computer science. He obtained permanent legal residency and was on track toward a life in the United States.</p> <p>By 20, Zhang’s American dream had vanished. The young man had been busted for assisting a now-notorious Seattle madam, Fang “Cindy” Wang, in operating a prostitution ring thought to have involved hundreds of women.</p> <p>Wang, 29, and five others – including Zhang, now 23 – were charged in May after a years-long investigation into the ring, which operated residential brothels out of apartments around Seattle and the rest of Washington. Wang, a Queens, New York, resident with Seattle ties, was described as the ringleader and has been sentenced to 2½ years in prison.</p> <p>Appearing Thursday in U.S. District Court at Seattle, Zhang described the sex trafficking ring as one of many operating in the region. While Wang’s ring largely involved Chinese women, Zhang told U.S. District Judge Thomas Zilly similar brothel circuits were staffed by women from South Korea and India, as well as the United States.</p> <p>Zilly sentenced Zhang to 21 months in federal prison, the second-heaviest term handed down as part of the investigation. For his part, Zhang apologized for posting advertisements and shuttling women between the brothels.</p> <p>Zhang will likely be deported to China, which may prove particularly problematic for him. Zhang joined the U.S. Army while under investigation, and his attorney expressed concerns regarding China’s enthusiasm for that decision.</p> <p>As prosecutors tell it, Zhang was a mid-level player in the prostitution ring. Wang stood at the center.</p>

The ring's business was staffing and maintaining residential brothels, a method of prostitution that has received increased scrutiny in recent years.

Operators recruit women – often internationally, and sometimes disingenuously – to live in apartments rented to provide a space for liaisons. In recent years, such brothels have been discovered inside high-end apartment complexes in Eastside suburbs. A 2013 federal prosecution targeted a group running bogus massage parlors out of luxury apartments in Bellevue and Kirkland.

The brothels were also central to “The Review Board,” a prostitute-ratings site shuttered in January 2016 after a large sting operation. The board had been well-known to police for more than a decade prior to that bust, which law enforcement leaders argued was necessary in part to stop the exploitation of foreign-born women.

Wang's ring followed a well-established pattern. Women were recruited abroad or inside the United States, often through the WeChat messaging app. Couriers like Zhang would retrieve them at Sea-Tac International Airport and deliver them to the brothels. Some women also performed “outcall” services for sex buyers at hotels.

Investigators contend Wang's ring formed in October 2013 and ran until an FBI-led organized crime unit intervened in May. Most of the advertising was done on Backpage.com, though Zhang said interest in the notorious site waned in the ring's final years.

Women involved in the ring testified that Wang recruited them to Seattle to perform “massage work.” While some knew Wang meant prostitution, others apparently believed they would be performing legitimate massage.

The women paid Wang and her confederates portions of their earnings. Assistant U.S. Attorney Catherine Crisham noted that the women had few if any connections in Seattle. Many also lacked legal status in the United States and were entirely reliant on Wang's crew for their daily needs.

“Many of the women stated that they felt isolated and vulnerable, living in unfamiliar apartment complexes where they did not know anyone, did not speak the language, and were reliant upon Wang and her co-conspirators for food and transportation,” Crisham said.

“Although some of the women told law enforcement that they knew when they agreed to work for Wang that they would be engaging in prostitution, many others stated that the experience had been emotionally traumatic for them, and that they had only worked as prostitutes because they felt that they had no other options for making money,” the prosecutor continued.

Wang herself previously worked as a prostitute, an experience that included “horrific sexual and physical abuse,” according to defense attorney Stephan Illa. Though her attorney, Wang denied leading the ring.

The ring operated in apartments or hotels located in Bellevue, Kent, Kirkland, Lynnwood, Olympia, Lacey, Puyallup, Renton, Tukwila, Seattle and Federal Way. Other locations where the ring operated include Eastern Washington cities such as Richland, Kennewick, Wenatchee and Spokane.

Yongguang Wu, 28, of Seattle and Steven Thompson, 59, of Renton, were each sentenced to eight months in prison for their roles in the ring. Yunzhong Chen, 45, and Yaoan He, 33, of Seattle, were each sentenced to one year in prison. All of the defendants pleaded guilty to prostitution-related offenses.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE 02/01 Louisville officer shot during traffic stop

SOURCE <https://apnews.com/ca6321a02efe4d4c86bab3657e147847/Police:-1-suspect-dead,-Louisville-officer-shot-and-wounded>

GIST	<p>LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — A Louisville police detective was injured in a shooting during a traffic stop as officers shot and killed one suspect and wounded another in a neighborhood in the eastern part of the city.</p> <p>Louisville Police Chief Steve Conrad says the officer, a narcotics detective, was struck in the head during an “exchange of gunfire.”</p> <p>Conrad didn’t give details about the officer’s condition but Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer told reporters “we’re grateful our officer is going to be ok.”</p> <p>Conrad says the officer and the wounded suspect were being treated at a hospital. He did not identify the officer or the suspects.</p> <p>Conrad says the car was stopped during a narcotics investigation and several officers were on the scene at the time. The chief says the department’s Public Integrity Unit is handling the investigation.</p>
<p>Return to</p> <p>Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/02 Judge tosses Fla. ex-felons voting ban
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/34875385904644f5b77773277d9a0ed8/Federal-judge-knocks-down-Florida's-voting-ban-for-ex-felons
GIST	<p>TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — In a ruling that could have reverberations on this year’s crucial elections, a federal judge Thursday ruled that Florida’s current ban on former felons voting is unconstitutional and needs to be changed as soon as possible.</p> <p>U.S. District Judge Mark Walker issued a blistering ruling that says the state’s current process to restore voting rights — which can take years — is flawed. The lawsuit was filed last year against Gov. Rick Scott by a voting rights organization on behalf of several people who had completed their prison sentences but had their request for voting rights turned down.</p> <p>Walker, who was appointed by President Barack Obama, said he will decide soon what Florida should do to fix the process. His 43-page ruling blasted Scott and state officials for the current system in place.</p> <p>“A person convicted of a crime may have long ago exited the prison cell and completed probation,” Walker wrote. “Her voting rights, however, remain locked in a dark crypt. Only the state has the key — but the state has swallowed it.”</p> <p>John Tupps, a spokesman for Scott, defended the process and suggested that an appeal was likely.</p> <p>“The governor believes that convicted felons should show that they can lead a life free of crime and be accountable to their victims and our communities,” said Tupps. “While we are reviewing today’s ruling, we will continue to defend this process in the court.”</p> <p>The ruling comes just months before Florida voters will be asked to alter the current ban. Backers of a constitutional amendment last week won a place on the November 2018 ballot. If sixty percent of voters approve, most former prisoners would have their rights automatically restored.</p>
<p>Return to</p> <p>Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 Police: L.A. school shooting was accident
SOURCE	http://time.com/5129917/los-angeles-school-shooting-accident/?xid=homepage
GIST	<p>(LOS ANGELES) — A shooting at a Los Angeles middle school classroom Thursday that left one boy in critical condition, injured four others and had panicked parents in tears was an accident, police said.</p> <p>The shooting was reported just before 9 a.m. and within minutes a 12-year-old girl was taken into custody</p>

<p>Return to Top</p>	<p>without incident. Police interviewed her and by evening they announced that they would book her on a charge of negligent discharge of a firearm on school grounds.</p> <p>The determination capped a frantic day at Salvador B. Castro Middle School in downtown Los Angeles and corroborated what some students told reporters after the lockdown was lifted and they were reunited with parents on the school's athletic field.</p> <p>In a telephone interview with his mother alongside, Jordan Valenzuela, 12, told The Associated Press he was in the classroom next door when he heard a loud bang. He said he talked to the girl just after the shooting and she was sobbing.</p> <p>“She was like, ‘I didn’t mean to. I had the gun in my backpack and I didn’t know it was loaded and my backpack fell and the gun went off,’” he said.</p>
--------------------------------------	--

HEADLINE	02/01 Seattle: man stabbed on metro bus
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/887886/man-stabbed-on-metro-bus-in-seattle/
GIST	<p>SEATTLE (AP) — Authorities say a 53-year-old man was stabbed in the abdomen while riding a King County Metro bus in Seattle.</p> <p>The Seattle Times reports the incident happened Thursday afternoon south of downtown.</p> <p>The King County Sheriff’s Office says the circumstances that led to the stabbing remain unknown, according to Sheriff’s Sgt. Cindi West.</p> <p>The sheriff’s office says deputies are searching for the assailant.</p> <p>The sheriff’s office said Thursday night that the 53-year-old man was conscious and alert at Harborview Medical Center.</p> <p>No further information was immediately available.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 NAACP official charged w/attempted theft
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/888028/seattle-naACP-official-accused-of-cheating-voucher-program/
GIST	<p>SEATTLE (AP) — A former City Council candidate has been charged with a misdemeanor for allegations that she tried to cheat Seattle’s “democracy vouchers” program.</p> <p>The Seattle Times reports that false-reporting and attempted-theft charges were filed Wednesday against Sheley Secret, an attorney and vice president of the local NAACP chapter.</p> <p>Secret’s lawyer Jennifer Miller says she and her client look forward to their defense.</p> <p>Seattle voters receive \$100 in vouchers, which they can donate to candidates. To qualify for the money, candidates are required to collect contributions and signatures from at least 400 voters.</p> <p>Seattle police Detective Lawrence Meyer had begun investigating Secret last year. Meyer says that in an attempt to qualify for the vouchers, Secret appeared to have put her own money into her campaign while claiming voters donated the funds.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 Smash-grab robbery suspects charged
SOURCE	http://q13fox.com/2018/02/01/police-find-suspects-to-do-list-in-serial-rolex-smash-and-grab-robberies-hit-a-ben-bridge/
GIST	<p>SEATTLE — King County prosecutors have charged three of the four suspects accused of stealing \$236,000 worth of Rolex watches during a smash and grab robbery at the downtown Seattle Ben Bridge jewelry store on Dec. 22, 2017.</p> <p>The suspects used a large sledge hammer to smash the glass, causing half a million dollars in damage to 50 other watches in the case.</p> <p>Christopher Patterson, Aufu Snow and Nathaniel McRae are all in the King County jail charged with first degree robbery.</p> <p>Patterson is also a suspect in similar smash-and-grab robberies at Ben Bridge stores in Lynnwood and Seattle, as well as two other robberies. Police say anonymous tips from Washington’s Most Wanted viewers to Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound helped identify the suspects.</p> <p>When detectives in the Seattle Police Robbery Unit arrested Patterson on Jan. 25 at his home on 60th Avenue West in Mountlake Terrace, they say the found a to do list written on a yellow piece of paper that said, “Hit a Ben Bridge.”</p> <p>Court documents show that after the Alderwood Mall robbery, Patterson posted a photo on social media under the name ‘Du King’ of him wearing the Rolex bragging about doing a ‘lick’ which is a colloquial term for robbery.</p> <p>Investigators also recovered an Adidas sweat suit matching the one worn by one of two suspects in a robbery at the Go Mobile store on S. Graham St. in South Seattle on Nov. 20, 2017.</p> <p>When questioned, Patterson denied any wrongdoing and said it was a ‘case of mistaken identity’. Patterson posted a picture of himself on social media wearing a Rolex watch that matched one stolen from a similar robbery at the Alderwood Ben Bridge store.</p> <p>His criminal history includes convictions for Unlawful Possession of a Firearm, 3 counts of Residential Burglary, Theft of a Firearm, Vehicle Prowling,</p> <p>Reckless Driving and Burglary 2nd Degree. Patterson is being held on \$200,000 bail and is scheduled to be formally arraigned on Feb. 12.</p> <p>Detectives say Snow is also a suspect in a theft of \$1,600 worth of jackets from the REI store in Issaquah on Jan. 2, 2018. Surveillance video shows him wearing a braided wig which gang detectives say he has been known to do in the past. He has not been charged yet in the case. Snow is being held on \$250,000 bail.</p> <p>McRae is accused of opening the door closest to the Rolex cases to let the suspects enter quickly. He told detectives he was paid \$100 and that he was asked to exit the store like he had just purchased some jewelry because they were making a move. Police say surveillance video from nearby stores showed McRae, Snow and Patterson meeting before the Ben Bridge Robbery. He is being held on \$250,000 bail.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 US school shootings w/female shooters
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/us/2018/02/01/school-shootings-with-female-shooters.html
GIST	<p>A 12-year-old girl was accused in a shooting at a middle school in Los Angeles on Thursday.</p> <p>One classmate was left critically wounded and three others were hurt, according to authorities.</p>

While female shooters are rare, there have been a series of violent incidents in the past involving children, teens and adult women. Read on for a look at other some school shootings involving female shooters.

2016

Dorothy Dutiel, 15, shot and killed her 15-year-old girlfriend May Kieu at Independence High School in Glendale, Ariz., before shooting herself, KPNX reported.

“She hasn’t loved me like that for a long time,” the station quoted Dutiel as saying in a note. “That she’s been iffy about us for years. This week has been the worst in my life.”

2015

Sunghee Kwon, 46, repeatedly shot her 45-year-old professor ex-husband Raja Farhad at the University of South Carolina before shooting herself in the abdomen, Reuters reported.

“They had continued in a relationship after their divorce, including sharing a home, until just recently,” Richland County Coroner Gary Watts said in a statement at the time.

2010

Professor Amy Bishop killed three people and hurt another three in a shooting at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, the FBI said in a report on mass shootings. She was in a biology department meeting for a half-hour before she “stood up and began firing,” it said.

Bishop was sentenced in 2012 to life without parole after she pleaded guilty to capital murder and attempted murder charges.

Bishop has filed numerous appeals in the case, WAFF reported in 2015.

2008

Teah Wimberly was 15 years old when police said she shot 15-year-old Amanda Collette in the back at Dillard High School in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, in November 2008. Wimberly later was convicted of second-degree murder and received a 25-year prison sentence, WTVJ Miami reported.

“I will never forgive myself for what I have done, and I don't expect you to forgive me,” she reportedly told Collette’s family in court. “You have no idea how sorry I truly am.”

2008

Latina Williams, 23, killed two students in a Louisiana Technical College classroom before killing herself, according to the FBI report.

“She fired six rounds, then reloaded and committed suicide before police arrived,” the report said. Killed were Karsheika Graves, 21, and Taneshia Butler, 26.

After the shooting, Baton Rouge police reportedly said Williams had been exhibiting signs “of paranoia and losing touch with reality.”

2001

Elizabeth Bush, 14, was accused of shooting 13-year-old Kimberly Marchese in the shoulder at a parochial school in Williamsport, Pa. Bush told a judge in 2001 that she initially planned “to shoot myself and show everybody how much (teasing) hurts so they could see,” The Associated Press reported at the time.

“It just happened, sir. I don't know,” Bush later said when the judge inquired about her changed decision. “I just wanted to scare her.”

The judge said he thought Bush “intentionally sought to cause her death” and sentenced Bush to a juvenile psychiatric facility, the AP reported.

1996

Jillian Robbins, 19, was accused of opening fire at Penn State University with a rifle, killing 21-year-old student Melanie Spalla, The Collegian reported.

Robbins, who was mentally ill, pleaded guilty to third-degree murder and attempting to kill another four people, the AP reported in 1998. She was sentenced to 30 to 60 years behind bars.

1988

Laurie Dann, 30, killed 8-year-old Nicky Corwin and hurt five other children in a shooting at Hubbard Woods School in Winnetka, Illinois, as part of a crime spree, WMAQ Chicago reported.

Dann took off and held a family hostage in a home, the report added. She shot one of the family members, a 20-year-old college student who survived, and ultimately killed herself.

1979

California teenager Brenda Spencer carried out an attack on Cleveland Elementary School in San Diego.

The 16-year-old “opened fire at an elementary school, killing the principal and a custodian and wounding eight children and a police officer,” according to an NYPD report on active shooters. “Spencer fired the shots from her house across the street from the school.”

Spencer purportedly said it was because she didn't like Mondays.

She later pleaded guilty to two counts of murder and assault with a deadly weapon and remains behind bars, History.com reported.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/02 Fake Super Bowl merchandise seized
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/sports/2018/02/02/15m-in-counterfeit-super-bowl-merchandise-seized-authorities-say.html
GIST	<p>More than \$15 million in bogus Super Bowl merchandise and other items has been seized through Operation Team Player, which has also resulted in 65 arrests and 24 convictions, authorities said Tuesday.</p> <p>In all, nearly 172,000 items were confiscated, representatives of federal law enforcement agencies and the Minneapolis Police Department said at a news conference Tuesday.</p> <p>“Intellectual property theft is a serious crime, and black-market organizations descend on the Super Bowl and other major sporting events to sell counterfeit goods and substandard merchandise to unsuspecting consumers,” Thomas D. Homan, acting director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) said.</p> <p>“ICE agents are committed to investigating the trafficking of counterfeit goods that wreak havoc on local economies, threaten the health and safety of the American public and fund criminal organizations engaged in other illegal activities,” Homan added.</p> <p>The year-round Operation Team Player was a joint operation involving the NFL, ICE, the FBI, Customs and Border Protection and the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD).</p> <p>The operation led to the seizure of fake jerseys, hats, cell-phone paraphernalia as well as thousands of other items that were intended to be sold to customers.</p> <p>“We’ve been at major mailing facilities, we’ve been intersecting packages, we’ve been seizing counterfeit goods,” Matthew Bourke, spokesman for the National Intellectual Property Rights Center, told Fox 9 in</p>

	<p>Minneapolis-St. Paul. “We have targeting capabilities; we know where it’s coming from. We know who’s getting it.”</p> <p>Operation Team Player was set up after last year’s Super Bowl. Since then, there has been a 16 percent increase in arrests. Major sporting leagues have teamed up with the HSI-led Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center (IPR) to combat criminal counterfeiting and piracy.</p> <p>"(I)llicit trade carries consequences that linger far after the fourth quarter," said David Hirschmann, president and CEO of the U.S. Chamber’s Global Innovation Policy Center. "Counterfeiters sell substandard products, jeopardize consumers’ personal and financial information, and undermine American jobs and innovation.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/02 France: police reinforcements to Calais
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/france-sends-police-calais-migrant-gunfight-52787850
GIST	<p>Police reinforcements are arriving in the French port city of Calais after clashes among migrants left 22 people injured, as the interior minister warned of a worrying spike in violence.</p> <p>Interior Minister Gerard Collomb told reporters in Calais on Friday that five of the victims were injured by gunfire in Thursday's fighting, blaming "totally organized" gangs. Police are seeking a shooting suspect but have made no arrests.</p> <p>Collomb said two extra police units were en route and warned of growing tensions in Calais, where migrants converge in hopes of crossing to Britain.</p> <p>Authorities said that Afghan and Eritrean migrants had been fighting with sticks and stones after a meal distribution before the shots were fired. Firearms are rare among migrants.</p> <p>The government closed a vast Calais migrant camp in 2016.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 ‘Slender man’ teen 40yrs institution care
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/US/2nd-teen-slender-man-stabbing-case-remain-institutional/story?
GIST	<p>A Wisconsin judge has sentenced the second of two teenage girls accused of the 2014 attempted homicide of their friend by stabbing her in the woods to please the fictional character Slender Man.</p> <p>Morgan Geysler, 15, was sentenced to 40 years under a mental health institution's supervision. While she may periodically petition for release from the hospital in the future, she will be under institutional supervision for that time.</p> <p>“I just want to let Bella and her family know that I’m sorry,” Geysler told the court after arguments, breaking into tears. “I never meant this to happen. I hope that she’s doing well.”</p> <p>Bella is the nickname Geysler had given the victim, Payton Leutner, when they were younger.</p> <p>Geysler and Anissa Weier were arrested May 31, 2014, after attacking Leutner with a knife and leaving her behind in the Waukesha woods. All three girls were 12 years old at the time.</p> <p>Leutner was stabbed 19 times, but able to crawl to a nearby road where a passing bicyclist stopped to help her. Now 15, she survived her life-threatening injuries.</p>

	Prosecutors have said that both Geyser and Weier were obsessed with Slender Man, a character often depicted in fan fiction online as a horror figure who stalks children.
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/02 Robert Wagner 'person of interest'
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/witnesses-emerge-actress-natalie-woods-1981-drowning-52786087
GIST	<p>New witnesses have emerged in the 1981 drowning of actress Natalie Wood, prompting investigators to deem it a "suspicious death" and name her former husband, 87-year-old actor Robert Wagner, a "person of interest," Los Angeles sheriff's officials said.</p> <p>For nearly four decades, mystery and speculation have swirled around the death of the actress who was nominated for three Academy Awards and starred in "West Side Story" and "Rebel Without a Cause."</p> <p>She was on a yacht with Wagner, actor Christopher Walken and the boat captain on Thanksgiving weekend of 1981. After a night of drinking, her body was found floating in the waters off Southern California's Catalina Island. She was 43.</p> <p>Investigators initially ruled it an accident but reopened the case in 2011 to see whether Wagner or anyone else played a role after the boat's captain said he heard the couple arguing the night of her disappearance. The coroner's office amended Wood's death certificate the next year to include "drowning and other undetermined factors."</p> <p>In a statement Thursday, sheriff's spokeswoman Nicole Nishida said new witnesses interviewed since the case was reopened gave statements that "portray a new sequence of events on the boat that night."</p> <p>One of the witnesses described hearing yelling and crashing sounds coming from the couple's stateroom, she said. Shortly after that, separate witnesses heard a man and woman arguing on the back of the boat and believe the voices were those of Wood and Wagner, Nishida said.</p> <p>The statements differed from the original version of events provided by witnesses, including those who were on the boat, she said.</p> <p>The sheriff's department said Wagner is considered a person of interest.</p> <p>"Do we have enough to make an arrest at this moment? No," Nishida said.</p>
Return to Top	

HEADLINE	02/01 Migrant melee in Calais; 4 shot
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/migrants-calais-shot-french-police-break-melee-52772116
GIST	<p>Four migrants were shot and wounded Thursday during a confrontation in France's port city of Calais, with an Afghan migrant apparently firing the shots, the French Interior Ministry said.</p> <p>Afghan and Eritrean migrants in the city, a gateway to Britain, had been fighting with sticks and stones before the shots were fired, regional authorities said.</p> <p>Police had moved in to try to protect migrants who were being attacked, the ministry said in a statement. The four who were shot were listed in serious condition, while 14 others were slightly injured. The nationalities of the people hurt were not immediately clear.</p> <p>The prefecture of the Pas-de-Calais had said earlier that two confrontations between Afghan and Eritrean</p>

migrants culminated in the gunfire. It is unusual for migrants to carry firearms.

The shootings are the most serious clash in recent times between migrants around Calais. French Interior Minister Gerard Collomb headed to the city for late-night meetings with officials.

Tensions have been high in Calais, where hundreds of migrants hoping to sneak across the English Channel huddle against the cold and police have orders to try to keep them from setting up camp. However, some officers have been criticized for overzealous policing.

The Pas-de-Calais prefecture said security forces were trying to protect Afghan migrants during a melee with Eritreans when the injuries happened.

The prefecture said the gunfire was the culmination of a showdown between Afghan and Eritrean migrants, fighting each other with sticks and stones, after a meal distribution near the Calais hospital, outside the town center.

In a second confrontation, up to 200 Eritrean migrants cornered 30 Afghans near the former site of a makeshift migrant camp that housed thousands of people before it was evacuated and destroyed in October 2016.

After police moved in "to protect the Afghan migrants," the four were shot, the prefecture said.

[Return to Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Jan. smuggling busts find 200 illegals
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/us/2018/02/01/nearly-200-illegal-immigrants-found-in-just-three-january-smuggling-busts.html
GIST	<p>Nearly 200 people from Mexico and Central America were stuffed inside large trucks and caught trying to enter the United States illegally during three huge January smuggling busts that occurred in just nine days.</p> <p>Officials in southern California said 77 people, including 5 children, were found near the Mexico border Monday packed inside a sweltering truck that had been painted to resemble a UPS truck.</p> <p>The San Diego Union-Tribune reported a U.S. border patrol agent in Boulevard, Calif., noticed the truck was riding low and “could smell body odor mixed with a distinct type of pungent soap which is commonly used in Mexico.”</p> <p>Inside the truck's cargo area, officials found people sweating and standing shoulder-to-shoulder.</p> <p>Border Patrol found a tunnel on the U.S. - Mexico border after a cave in at construction site</p> <p>A similar scene greeted authorities last week in Laredo, Texas, where border patrol agents found 76 immigrants, including 13 children, from Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala lying on the floor or crouching against the walls of a tractor-trailer rig.</p> <p>A week earlier, also in Laredo, border agents stopped a tractor-trailer with 29 illegal immigrants from Mexico and Guatemala crossing into the U.S.</p> <p>Laredo and southern California are home to two of the largest trade and transportation ports along the U.S.-Mexico border, and hundreds, if not thousands, of tractor-trailers move goods between the two countries.</p> <p>Smugglers are taking advantage and carrying human cargo that can be easily transported across country lines without easy detection.</p> <p>Jessica Vaughn, director of policy studies for the Center for Immigration Studies, told Fox News on</p>

Thursday that these locations are funnels for an “enormous” volume of international trade, making them easy targets for smugglers.

“There is no way that all of them are screened [as closely as they should be],” she said, adding the financial incentive from smugglers and drivers is just too high to discard.

In the case out of Boulevard earlier this week, the driver was identified as Shawn Lee Seiler, a U.S. citizen who told authorities he was “an alien smuggler” who expected to get paid \$100 per immigrant that he got across. According to court documents, Seiler was surprised to learn there were 77 people in the truck as he was only expecting 50.

“[This] is only a fraction of what the smugglers [who are putting them on the trucks] are getting,” Vaughn said. “It’s a couple thousand – I believe the going rate was around \$3,000 a person.”

She continued: “The cartels that control the flow are making a huge amount of money...It’s a multi-million dollar business.”

All of the immigrants swept up during the three January busts were in good condition when they were found -- but this is not always the case.

Last July, 10 people died as they were being smuggled through Texas. Thirty-nine immigrants were found packed into a semitrailer in the parking lot of a San Antonio Walmart. Eight were already dead when officials opened the trailer's door and two more died at hospitals.

The truck's refrigeration system wasn't working and the day's temperature had climbed to 101 degrees.

The truck driver, identified as 60-year-old James Mathew Bradley Jr., of Clearwater, Fla., later pleaded guilty to conspiracy and to transporting immigrants resulting in death.

“These criminal organizations view these individuals as mere commodities without regard for their safety,” Gabriel Acosta, assistant chief patrol agent for the Laredo Border Patrol sector, said about the recent incidents. “The blatant disregard for human life will not be tolerated.”

It’s unclear how many tractor-trailers cross the border filled with human cargo and go undetected. A spokesman for U.S. Customs and Border Protection did not immediately respond to Fox News’ request for comment on Thursday.

[Return to](#)

[Top](#)

HEADLINE	02/01 Puerto Rico: 78 killings in Jan.
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/puerto-rico-reports-78-killings-deadliest-months-52773055?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>One of Puerto Rico's deadliest months in recent years has closed, with 78 killings reported in January as the U.S. territory struggles with a surge in violent crime and growing discontent among thousands of police officers.</p> <p>The killings included a 20-year-old woman found kneeling and burned to death inside a car in the upscale city of Guaynabo and a triple homicide reported in the eastern mountain town of San Lorenzo.</p> <p>Puerto Rico's homicide rate is roughly 20 killings per 100,000 residents, compared with 3.7 per 100,000 residents on the U.S. mainland.</p> <p>"I'm gravely concerned about these violent incidents reported in recent days," said Sen. Miguel Laureano. "It's a dramatic situation that requires immediate attention."</p>

	<p>The majority of people killed last month were young men shot to death. The central mountain town of Caguas reported the highest number of homicides at 18, followed by the capital of San Juan with 14.</p> <p>Police have issued warrants or arrested suspects in only a handful of the cases. On Thursday, authorities asked the public for help in solving the case of the young woman found burned inside the car. Police said they believe she was on her way to pick up a family member the day she was killed.</p> <p>Hector Pesquera, head of Puerto Rico's newly created Department of Public Safety, has said most of the killings in January were tied to drugs but added that there was "no rhyme or reason" to explain the surge.</p> <p>In mid-January, local and federal officials announced they would implement a "broken windows" policing campaign to help reduce the number of killings. The plan is to crack down on all types of violations, including traffic infractions and illegal tints on car windows, to help get criminals off the street and prevent bigger crimes.</p> <p>The increase in killings came weeks after thousands of police officers began calling in sick daily to protest millions of dollars owed in overtime pay following Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Absences have returned to the normal daily average, Pesquera says, but thousands of police officers are still upset about austerity measures, including a sharp reduction in their monthly pensions and an end to being able to cash in unused sick days.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 Men indicted gun smuggling for Kurds
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/charged-seattle-smuggle-guns-turkey-52773989?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>Two Seattle-area men face federal charges that they smuggled guns to Turkey — weapons that were ultimately destined for Kurdish fighters in Iraq.</p> <p>A grand jury late Wednesday indicted 51-year-old Paul Brunt, of Bellevue, and 29-year-old Rawnd Khaleel Aldalawi, an Iraq native who lives in Seattle.</p> <p>Prosecutors say Brunt bought the firearms and the men shipped them hidden in the side panels of vehicles.</p> <p>The U.S. attorney's office says the first shipment, in February 2017, involved 30 guns hidden in three cars. The second, last November, included 47 guns hidden in two cars. The latter shipment was discovered by Turkish authorities, prompting the investigation.</p> <p>Aldalawi's lawyer declined to comment. Brunt's did not immediately return an email seeking comment.</p> <p>Investigators say the men acknowledged their actions in interviews and that Aldalawi said he was supporting the Peshmerga military in northern Iraq, because the Iraqi government did not help defend the region from the Islamic State group.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	01/31 NY prison inmates to get tablets
SOURCE	https://www.wkbw.com/news/state-news/all-inmates-in-nys-prisons-to-get-free-tablets
GIST	<p>BUFFALO, N.Y. (WKBW) - Under a new state contract, all inmates in New York State prisons will receive free tablets.</p> <p>The Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) is partnering with JPay, a company that specializes in inmate and corrections-related services. JPay is providing the tablets at no cost to the state or inmates, and DOCCS is not taking commissions for the tablets.</p>

	<p>The tablets will be preloaded with educational content and DOCCS plans to make additional services available through the tablets, such as Prison Rape Elimination Act reporting, Grievance filing, and the potential for placing commissary orders.</p> <p>According to DOCCS, JPay will get money from transactions that happen via the tablets (ebooks, music, videos). The tablets are only part of a larger contract with JPay who are also handling commissary and care packages sent from families to inmates.</p> <p>The tablets will not be able to connect to the internet, but inmates will be able to use the tablets to purchase music, e-books, videos, and other entertainment. There will also be controlled kiosks where inmates can plug their tablet in to send emails to an approved list of recipients. Inmates will only have supervised access to the kiosks at scheduled times.</p> <p>State corrections officials say they believe using the tablets will help inmates stay in touch with their families and be better prepared to reenter into the community.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

HEADLINE	02/01 L.A. school shooting: 12yr-old suspect
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/01/us/los-angeles-sal-castro-middle-school-shooting/index.html
GIST	<p>(CNN)Two 15-year-old students were shot Thursday morning in a classroom at Sal Castro Middle School in Los Angeles, and a 12-year-old female student is in custody as a suspect, officials said.</p> <p>One boy was shot in the head and is in critical condition, and a girl was shot in the wrist at the school, which shares a campus with Belmont High School, Los Angeles fire Capt. Eric Scott said.</p> <p>Three others -- a woman and two children -- were being treated for minor cuts, including some from glass, Scott said.</p> <p>"Our campus, while it's on lockdown, is safe. There is no more safety threat to the students of this school," city schools Police Chief Steven Zipperman said late Thursday morning.</p> <p>The shooting was reported to Los Angeles police at 8:55 a.m. Police found and confiscated a gun at the scene, Los Angeles police Lt. Chris Ramirez said.</p> <p>Police didn't say what led to the shooting, and little information was immediately released about the girl who was detained. Zipperman said she was 12.</p> <p>The motive is under investigation, Ramirez said. Ramirez and Los Angeles police spokesman Drake Madison both said the girl in custody is a suspect.</p>
<p>Return to Top</p>	

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Return to Top](#)