

# Amid Sex Misconduct Allegations: Trump's Pick for Supreme Court Thrust Into Turmoil



President Donald Trump nominated Brett Kavanaugh, right, to fill the Supreme Court seat vacated by Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy.

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court was thrust into turmoil Sunday after the woman accusing him of high school-era sexual misconduct told her story publicly for the first time. Democrats immediately called for a delay in a key committee vote set for this week and a Republican on the closely divided panel said he's "not comfortable" voting on the nomination without first hearing from the

Ford, 51 and a clinical psychology professor at Palo Alto University in California, says she was able to get away after a friend of Kavanaugh's who was in the room jumped on top of them and everyone tumbled. Kavanaugh, 53 and a federal appeals judge in Washington, on Sunday repeated an earlier denial of Ford's allegation. "I categorically and unequivocally deny this allegation. I did not do this back in high school or at any time," Kavanaugh said through the White House. The allegation first came to light late last week in the form of a letter that has been in the possession of Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California, the top Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee, for some time. The committee recently concluded four days of public hearings on the nomination and the panel's Republican chairman, Chuck Grassley of Iowa, scheduled a Thursday vote on whether to recommend that the full Senate confirm Kavanaugh for a lifetime appointment to the nation's highest court. Democrats, led by New York Sen. Chuck Schumer, immediately called for it to be postponed, though Republicans gave no indication Sunday that they would accede to the calls by Democrats, most of whom already publicly oppose Kavanaugh. A spokesman for the Senate Judiciary Committee said late Sunday that Grassley is trying to arrange separate, follow-up calls with Kavanaugh and Ford, but just for aides to Grassley and Feinstein, before Thursday's scheduled vote.

## Imran Khan to Grant Citizenship to 1.5 Million Afghans



According to the UN, Pakistan has the largest refugee population in the world, mostly made up of 2.7 million refugees from Afghanistan.

ISLAMABAD (Guardian) — Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan has pledged to grant citizenship to 1.5 million Afghan refugees who have lived on the margins of Pakistan's society for decades. According to the UN, Pakistan has the largest refugee population in the world, mostly made up of 2.7 million refugees from Afghanistan. Many fled the Soviet invasion in 1979, while others came across the border due to violence and economic turmoil. In a surprise announcement on Sunday at a public event in Karachi, the Pakistani prime minister said: "Afghans whose children have been raised and born in Pakistan will be granted citizenship inshallah (God willing) because this is the established practice in countries around the world.

"They are humans. How come we have deprived them and have not arranged for offering them national identification card and passport for 30 years, 40 years?" According to UN surveys, about 60% of the Afghan refugee population was born in Pakistan, meaning almost 1.5 million people stand to benefit. Khan also promised the same treatment for Bengali refugees, which would include the Rohingya minority. Pakistan's citizenship act of 1951 guarantees citizenship to anyone born in the country. However, bureaucratic hurdles, ethnic rivalries and the exception against children whose parents come from "alien" or enemy nations has made it close to impossible for Afghan and Bengali refugees to secure their rights, along with the Pakistani passport

## Russia: Missile That Killed 298 People Was Ukrainian

MOSCOW (AP) — The Russian military said on Monday that the missile that shot down Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, killing all 298 people on board, came from the arsenals of the Ukrainian army, not from Russia. The jet was shot down by a Soviet-made missile over rebel-held eastern Ukraine in July 2014, about 40 kilometers from the Russian border, where fighting had been raging for months between Ukrainian forces and Russian-backed separatists. The Netherlands and Australia announced in May that they believe the missile was transported to

Ukraine from a military unit in the Russian city of Kursk. Russia has vehemently denied involvement and has over the years come up with various theories as to the cause of the crash, generally laying the blame on the Ukrainian side. Lt. Gen. Nikolai Parshin, chief of the Missile and Artillery Directorate at the Russian Defense Ministry, told reporters on Monday that the military had studied and declassified archives at the research center outside Moscow that produced the Buk missiles after the Dutch investigators displayed parts of the missile and their serial

numbers. Parshin said the Russian archives show that the missile that was made of these parts was transported to a military unit in western Ukraine in 1986, and to Russia's knowledge never left Ukraine. Asked about the possibility that the separatists may have seized the missile system during fighting in 2014, Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov conceded that Russia does not have any documents proving otherwise but pointed to the statements of Ukrainian officials who have denied that separatists seized any of their Bucs.

## Chinese General Attends Joint Forum With U.S.



General Song Puxuan (front R), head of China's Central Military Commission's Logistics Support Department and Terry M. Rauch (front C), acting U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense stand before a photo shoot during the opening ceremony of the Asia Pacific Military Health Exchange 2018, in Xian, Shaanxi province, China September 17, 2018.

XIAN, China (Reuters) — A top Chinese general attended the opening on Monday of a regional armed forces health forum organized by the Chinese and U.S. militaries, as the two sides set aside friction over trade and territorial issues such as the South China Sea. This week's Asia Pacific Military Health Exchange in the western city of Xian, best known as the home of the Terracotta Army, has about 600 participants, with military officials from 28 countries, including U.S. allies like Japan and Australia, attending. General Song Puxuan, head of China's Central Military Commission's Logistics Support Department, posed for pictures with Terry M. Rauch, acting U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, at the opening ceremony in one of Xian's upmarket hotels. Song, whose attendance was not previously publicly announced, did not address the conference. Military sources say he is close to President Xi Jinping and was previously head of the military's northern command,

having risen rapidly up the ranks since Xi took office six years ago. At the event, which features mostly technical discussions on preventing disease and treating injuries, China's armed forces will show off new equipment used for medical purposes, such as aircraft and vehicles. China was angered in May when the United States withdrew an invitation to a major U.S.-hosted naval drill, saying that closing the door does not promote mutual trust and cooperation. The Rimpac of the Pacific exercise, known as RIMPAC and previously attended by China, is billed as the world's largest international maritime exercise and held every two years in Hawaii in June and July. The Pentagon said the withdrawal of the invitation was in response to what it sees as Beijing's militarization of islands in the South China Sea. Still, China's navy chief Shen Jinlong plans to pay a working visit to the United States later this month, during which he will attend an international naval forum.

## Germany Roles Out World's First Hydrogen Train



The first hydrogen-powered train, by French train maker Alstom, arrives at the station in Bremervoerde, Germany, as it enters service on September 16, 2018.

BERLIN (AFP) — Germany on Monday rolled out the world's first hydrogen-powered train, signaling the start of a push to challenge the might of polluting diesel trains with costlier but more eco-friendly technology. Two bright blue Coradia iLint trains, built by French TGV-maker Alstom, began running a 100-kilometre (62-mile) route between the towns and cities of Cuxhaven, Bremerhaven, Bremervoerde and Buxtehude in northern Germany—a stretch normally plied by diesel trains. "The world's first hydrogen train is entering into commercial service and is ready for serial production," Alstom CEO Henri Poupart-Lafarge said at an unveiling ceremony in Bremervoerde, the station where the trains will be refueled with hydrogen. Alstom has said it plans to deliver another 14 of the zero-emissions trains to Lower Saxony state by 2021, with other German states also expressing an interest. Hydrogen trains are equipped with

fuel cells that produce electricity through a combination of hydrogen and oxygen, a process that leaves steam and water as the only emissions. Excess energy is stored in ion lithium batteries on board the train. The Coradia iLint trains can run for around 1,000 kilometres on a single tank of hydrogen, similar to the range of diesel trains. Alstom is betting on the technology as a greener, quieter alternative to diesel on non-electrified railway lines—an attractive prospect to many German cities scrambling to combat air pollution. "Sure, buying a hydrogen train is somewhat more expensive than a diesel train, but it is cheaper to run," Stefan Schrank, the project's manager at Alstom, told AFP. Other countries are also looking into hydrogen trains, Alstom said, including Britain, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Italy and Canada. In France, the government has already said it wants the first hydrogen train to be on the rails by 2022.



HAVANA (Reuters) — Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel said in his first interview since taking office in April his government could not talk with U.S. President Donald Trump as long as Trump's administration kept its "abnormal" attitude toward the Communist-run island. "We want to dialogue but it must be as equals," Diaz-Canel said in the wide-ranging interview with Venezuela-based television station Telesur broadcast on Sunday evening, echoing his predecessor and mentor, Raul Castro. "We do not accept impositions and we are not willing to make concessions," he said. Cuban-U.S. relations have deteriorated sharply since Trump took office and began partially rolling back the historic detente agreed by his predecessor Barack Obama after decades of hostility. They have also worsened over what the United States says were a spate of health attacks on its diplomats based in Havana. Cuba denies any involvement. "Cuba does not attack, Cuba defends, Cuba shares," said Diaz-Canel, who referred many times throughout the interview to Fidel Castro, the late leader of the 1959 revolution, and his younger brother, Raul Castro. Raul Castro, 87, remains head of the Communist Party until 2021 and is "like a father" to Diaz-Canel, according to the 58-year-old president who said they talk nearly every day. \*\*\*

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) — U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley accused Russia on Monday of "cheating" on UN sanctions on North Korea and said Washington has "evidence of consistent and wide-ranging Russian violations." Haley told the UN Security Council that while "difficult, sensitive talks" between the United States and North Korea are ongoing, it was the wrong time to start easing sanctions on Pyongyang. "Russia must cease its violations of North Korea sanctions. It must end its concerted effort to cover up evidence of sanctions violations," she said. "Its violations are not one-offs. They are systematic." Chinese UN Ambassador Ma Zhaoxu said the country implements sanctions on North Korea and warned that confronting Pyongyang would be a "dead end." He called for progress in negotiations between the United States and North Korea and urged the Security Council to remain united on the issue. "Resorting to force will bring nothing but disastrous consequences," Ma told the council. Russia and China suggested the Security Council discuss easing sanctions after U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met in June and Kim pledged to work toward denuclearization. \*\*\*

BEIJING (Reuters) — China's Foreign Ministry said Monday that the government would respond if the United States implements new tariffs, ahead of U.S. President Donald Trump's expected announcement of new tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese goods. Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang, speaking at a daily news briefing in Beijing, added that any talks between the two countries should take place on an equal footing. \*\*\*

MELBOURNE, Australia (Dispatches) — Public fears about sewing needles concealed inside strawberries on supermarket shelves have spread across Australia and New Zealand as growers turn to metal detectors and the Australian government launches an investigation to restore confidence in the popular fruit. The government of Queensland state, where the contamination scare started last week, has offered a 100,000 Australian dollar (\$72,000) reward for information leading to the arrest of the person responsible for inserting needles into strawberries after six brands were recalled. The scare had spread across the nation by Monday, with needles reported found in strawberries in all six Australian states. No injuries have been reported. Two major food distributors in New Zealand announced they are taking Australian strawberries off their shelves because of the scare. \*\*\*

ADDIS ABABA (Reuters) — At least 23 people were killed in a weekend of violence targeting minorities in the ethnic Oromo heartland near the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, a police source said. The unrest followed a mass rally last week marking the return to Ethiopia of the leadership of the exiled Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) group, which had fought an insurgency for self-determination for Oromos, Ethiopia's largest ethnic group. The incidents are the latest in a spate of attacks carried out along ethnic lines since reformist Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali came to power in April, the first Oromo leader in the ethnically diverse country's modern history. \*\*\*

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — A media report linking half of the cardinals and bishops who served in the Netherlands between 1945 and 2010 to abuse cases has drawn the country's Catholic Church into the church's global sex abuse and cover-up scandal. Respected Dutch daily NRC links 20 of 39 bishops and cardinals to abuse, saying four bishops committed abuse and another 16 senior clergymen transferred priests who had been accused of abuse to new locations. The report published in the paper's weekend edition was based on a 2011 Dutch Catholic Church report about abuse, victims' testimony to a commission of inquiry and the newspaper's own research. In a written reaction, the Dutch Catholic Church said that in confirmed cases of abuse, "bishops did not act with sufficient care" when transferring priests. \*\*\*