

## WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

## 13 Russians charged in Mueller investigation

WASHINGTON — Thirteen Russians and three Russian entities were charged today with an elaborate plot to interfere in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, federal prosecutors announced.

The indictment, brought by the office of special counsel Robert Mueller, alleges that Russians used bogus social media postings and advertisements fraudulently purchased in the name of Americans to sway political opinion during the race between Republican Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, his Democratic opponent.

The charges are the most direct allegation to date of illegal Russian meddling in the election.

The goal, the indictment says, was to “sow discord in the U.S. political system, including the 2016 presidential election.”

Charges include conspiracy, wire fraud, bank fraud and aggravated identity theft.

The charges arise from Mueller’s investigation into Russian interference in the election and whether there was improper coordination between the Trump campaign and the Kremlin.

Before today, four people, including Trump’s former national security adviser and former campaign chairman, had been charged in Mueller’s investigation.

The White House had no immediate response to the indictment.

## FBI received tip on Florida shooter but did not investigate

PARKLAND, Fla. — The FBI received a specific report in January that the suspect in the Florida school shooting could be plotting an attack, but agents failed to investigate the tip, the agency said today.

A tipster who was close to Nikola Cruz called the FBI and provided information about Cruz’s guns and his erratic behavior, including his expressed desire to kill people and his disturbing social media posts. The caller was concerned that Cruz could attack a school.

In a statement issued today, the agency acknowledged that the tip should have been investigated thoroughly.

The FBI was also notified about a comment on a YouTube video posted by a “Nikolas Cruz” last year. It investigated the comment but did not determine who made it.

Cruz has been charged with killing 17 people at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, north of Miami.

Also today, mourners gathered for the first

funeral for a shooting victim, packing the Star of David chapel to remember 14-year-old Alyssa Ahladeff.

Authorities have not described any specific motive, except to say that Cruz had been kicked out of the high school, which has about 3,000 students and serves an affluent suburb where the median home price is nearly \$600,000. Students who knew him described a volatile teenager whose strange behavior had caused others to end friendships.

Wednesday’s shooting was the 17th incident of gunfire at a U.S. school this year. Of these, one involved a suicide, two involved active shooters who killed students, two involved people killed in arguments and three involved people who were shot but survived. Nine involved no injuries at all.

## Magazine obtains ex-playmate’s account of Trump affair

NEW YORK — President Donald Trump had a nine-month extramarital affair with the 1998 Playboy Playmate of the year beginning in 2006, showing the woman his wife’s bedroom in Trump Tower and bringing her to his private bungalow at the Beverly Hills Hotel, according to the woman’s eight-page, handwritten account of the relationship obtained by The New Yorker magazine.

The woman, Karen McDougal, confirmed in the story published online today that she wrote the account but said she was constrained in what else she could say publicly about Trump because she’d signed a confidentiality agreement.

The story said McDougal was paid \$150,000 during the 2016 presidential campaign for the rights to her story of an affair with any “then-married man” by the supermarket tabloid National Enquirer, which never ran it.

Just before Election Day, The Wall Street Journal reported that the tabloid, whose publisher, David Pecker, is a longtime friend of Trump’s, had paid for McDougal’s story but wasn’t printing it, a tabloid industry practice known as “catch and kill.”

Former staffers at American Media Inc., the company that publishes the Enquirer and other gossip sites, have told The Associated Press the company often bought the rights to unflattering stories about certain celebrities. The practice, described by six former employees who had participated in such deals, could give Pecker leverage over celebrities so that he could elicit future favors, such as appearing on his magazines’ covers.

The White House said Trump denies having an affair with McDougal. The alleged affair occurred not long after Trump married his third wife, Melania, who had recently given birth to a son, the magazine reported.

## Senate rejects immigration bills; young immigrants in limbo

WASHINGTON — The Senate has left hundreds of thousands of “Dreamer” immigrants in limbo, rejecting rival plans that would have spared them from deportation and strengthened the nation’s border security. Senators dealt President Donald Trump an especially galling defeat as more than a quarter of fellow Republicans abandoned him on an issue that helped propel him to the White House.

Trump, on Twitter today, accused Democrats of abandoning Dreamers because they wouldn’t back his immigration plan. “Cannot believe how BADLY DACA recipients have been treated by the Democrats...totally abandoned! Republicans are still working hard.”

Also defeated Thursday was a compromise by a bipartisan group of senators that would have shielded the young immigrants and financed Trump’s demands for money to build his border wall, though more gradually than he wants. Eight Republicans joined most Democrats in backing that plan, but it fell short after the White House threatened a veto and GOP leaders opposed it.

The day’s votes, in which four separate proposals were defeated, illustrated anew Congress’ steep challenge in striking a deal on an issue that’s proven intractable for years and on which each party’s most fervent supporters refuse to budge. The outcome suggests there may be no permanent solution soon to help the young immigrants, despite their sky-high support in public polling.

The Senate votes left the young immigrants facing a March 5 deadline that Trump has given Congress to restore the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, that he annulled last year. Federal courts have blocked him temporarily from dismantling the Obama-era initiative, but without congressional action, the immigrants will face growing risks of deportation as their protections expire.

## Romney makes it official: He’s running for Utah Senate seat

SALT LAKE CITY — Former presidential hopeful Mitt Romney is running for a Utah Senate seat, officially launching his political comeback attempt today by praising his adopted home state as a model for an acrimonious national government in Washington.

Having been one of the Republican Party’s fiercest internal critics of President Donald Trump, Romney didn’t mention the administration or Trump himself in a campaign announcement posted online. The closest allusion to Trump was Romney noting that Utah “welcomes

legal immigrants from around the world,” while “Washington sends immigrants a message of exclusion.”

Romney, 70, will be the heavy favorite for the Senate seat being opened by Sen. Orrin Hatch’s retirement. Hatch was among the first Republicans to pitch Romney as his potential successor.

Leading up to Romney’s widely anticipated announcement, confidantes said he intends to focus his campaign on Utah, where he moved with his wife, Ann, after losing the 2012 presidential election to incumbent Democrat Barack Obama.

“Utah has a lot to teach the politicians in Washington,” Romney said in his announcement, noting that “on Utah’s Capitol Hill, people treat one another with respect.”

## Food box idea draws ire from Democrats, advocates

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration is pushing what it calls a “bold new approach to nutrition assistance”: replacing the traditional cash-on-a-card that food stamp recipients currently get with a pre-assembled box of canned foods and other shelf-stable goods dubbed “America’s Harvest Box.”

Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney likened the box to a meal kit delivery service, and said the plan could save nearly \$130 billion over 10 years. But the idea, tucked into President Donald Trump’s 2019 budget, has caused a firestorm, prompting scathing criticism from Democrats and nutrition experts who say its primary purpose is to punish the poor.

“The main goal is to alleviate food insecurity, and the reason SNAP is so successful is because it gives low-income families the autonomy and dignity to make their own food choices,” said Craig Gundersen, a professor in agricultural strategy at the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Gundersen said people will leave the program as a result of the shift.

SNAP — the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — is the official name for the food stamp programs.

Under the proposed plan, households that receive more than \$90 in SNAP benefits each month — roughly 81 percent of households in the program, or about 16.4 million — would be affected.

The proposal doesn’t include any concrete details about how much the program would cost or how it would be implemented, saying only that states will be given flexibility to distribute the boxes “through existing infrastructure, partnership, and/or directly to residences through commercial and/or retail delivery services.”

Lawmakers say they aren’t even sure where the idea came from.

## Terror and heroism revealed in Oregon climbing death 911 calls

By GILLIAN FLACCUS  
Associated Press

PORTLAND — The first thing that Braton Jurasevich noticed as he clambered down Mount Hood toward his fallen fellow mountain climber was the blood — a lot of it.

The critically injured climber, later identified as Miha Sumi, was sprawled with his feet above his head on an icy slope about 10,300 feet (3,140 meters) up the mountain.

Moments before, Sumi had slipped while descending from the summit and plummeted head over heels down a snowfield on Oregon’s tallest peak — his fall witnessed by nearly a half-dozen other climbers who called 911 as they watched helplessly.

Sumi would be pronounced dead at a Portland hospital later Tuesday after being airlifted off the slope. But when Jurasevich arrived, he was still alive.

“I’m the only one with eyes on the individual right now and I’m still 200 feet above the climber. He is not moving. I’m working my way down on a bad spot. I came across blood. There’s a big blood trail,” he tells the 911 dispatcher at the beginning of a call made public by the Clackamas County Sheriff’s Office late Wednesday.

Sumi had come to rest in the shadow of a rocky outcropping known as Crater Rock, stuck in a chute that acted like a natural funnel for a barrage of rocks that slammed down the mountain as the sun warmed the ice and sent ice and rocks plummeting downhill.

As Jurasevich inched closer, those rocks careened past, making rumbling sounds in the background of the call. A terrified Jurasevich tells the operator he’s not an experienced climber and doesn’t know what he’s doing, but will stay with Sumi until help arrives.

“Oh my God, a rock just went right by him. The sun’s out and it’s bad. The whole hill



AP Photo/Gillian Flaccus  
**Oregon’s Mount Hood is seen Tuesday from Timberline Lodge on the south side of the mountain.**

is falling apart,” he says, breathing heavily into his mobile phone.

“We’re still taking rocks and ice. ... Can you take a message for my mom for me? Tell her I love her,” Jurasevich says a few moments later. “I’m in a bad spot.”

The dramatic call is part of a release of three hours of 911 calls from the chaos on Mount Hood. While the 911 operator was on the line with Jurasevich, other climbers also called in to report seeing Sumi fall or to report that they were in trouble.

A woman who had been climbing with Sumi called 911 to report she and two others were stranded high up Mount Hood, pinned down by sheets of falling ice and tumbling rocks and unable to reach him.

“We just want to know what’s going on with our friend,” the woman, Kimberly Anderson, says to the dispatcher while crying.

Another shaken climber called moments after Sumi’s fall to say he wanted to climb down to his friend but was in a perilous position.

“I’m not sure if I can get to him. It’s far, it’s really far,” said the friend, Matt Zavortink. “I thought maybe I thought I saw him moving, but I can’t tell. I’d expect severe injuries.”

The unidentified female 911 operator stayed on the phone with Jurasevich for more than two hours as he tried to save Sumi, first by himself and then with the help of several other

climbers who reached the scene.

The climbers first reported Sumi’s pulse was 64 and he was breathing regularly, but they began rescue breaths and then CPR as his pulse faded and his breathing became erratic and then stopped. The callers continued CPR for 90 minutes until a rescue helicopter arrived, even though Sumi’s pupils were fixed and dilated.

The call is punctuated by warning shouts about tumbling rocks. At one point, the climbers move their backpacks above Sumi’s head to protect him.

“Hey Miha, if you can hear us, hang in there,” Jurasevich can be heard saying. “You’re looking good, you’re doing good. We’re going to get you a ride out of here.”

Anderson, the female caller in Sumi’s party, was evacuated from the mountain nearly seven hours later on a sled after she became unable to move for reasons that have not been explained by authorities.

The other climbers were either brought down by snow tractor or hiked out with rescuers.

It was unclear how Jurasevich and the other climbers who helped Sumi got off Mount Hood.

Jurasevich did not answer his phone Thursday and his voicemail was full.

About 10,000 people climb Mount Hood each year, making it one of the most popular snow-covered peaks in the U.S. Its proximity to Portland and its accessibility contribute to that popularity. But conditions on the peak, which has 11 active glaciers, can be dangerous.

More than 130 people have died on the 11,240-foot (3,429-meter) mountain, including seven school children and two teachers who froze to death in 1986 and several climbers whose bodies haven’t been found.

Associated Press writer Steven Dubois in Portland contributed to this report.

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