

## BRIEFLY

## Seven U.S. Navy crew reported missing after collision off Japan

TOKYO (AP) — Seven Navy sailors are missing and one was injured after a U.S. destroyer collided early Saturday morning with a merchant ship off the coast of Japan, the country's coast guard reported.

Footage from the Japanese TV network NHK showed heavy damage to the mid-right side of the USS Fitzgerald and a person in a stretcher being lifted to a helicopter.

The Navy's 7th Fleet said on its Facebook page that the number of injuries is still being determined. The Fitzgerald has limited propulsion after suffering damage to the starboard side below the water line. A U.S. defense official said there is flooding in three compartments.

The Japan coast guard said it received an emergency call from a Philippine-registered container ship ACX Crystal around 2:20 a.m. that it had collided with the USS Fitzgerald southwest of Yokosuka, Japan.

## Congressman Scalise doctor hopes for 'excellent recovery' despite risk

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congressman Steve Scalise can hope to make an "excellent recovery," his trauma surgeon said Friday, even though the lawmaker arrived at the hospital Wednesday at imminent risk of death after getting shot at a congressional baseball practice.

Dr. Jack Sava of MedStar Washington Hospital Center said it's a "good possibility" that the Louisiana Republican will be able to return to work.

Sava declined to put a timeline on when that would happen or when Scalise, 51, would be able to leave the hospital. The doctor described how a bullet from an assault rifle entered Scalise's hip and traversed his pelvis, shattering blood vessels, bones and internal organs along the way.

For now, Scalise remains in critical condition in the hospital's intensive care unit.

## Trump thrusts U.S., Cuba back toward hostile relations

MIAMI (AP) — Pressing "pause" on a historic detente, President Donald Trump thrust the U.S. and Cuba back on a path toward open hostility Friday with a blistering denunciation of the island's communist government. He clamped down on some commerce and travel but left intact many new avenues President Barack Obama had opened.

The Cuban government responded Friday evening by rejecting what it called Trump's "hostile rhetoric." Still, Cuba said it is willing to continue "respectful dialogue" with on topics of mutual interest.

Even as Trump predicted a quick end to President Raul Castro's regime, he challenged Cuba to negotiate better agreements for Americans, Cubans and those whose identities lie somewhere in between. Diplomatic relations, restored only two years ago, will remain intact. But, in a shift from Obama's approach, Trump said trade and other penalties would stay in place until a long list of prerequisites was met.

"America has rejected the Cuban people's oppressors," Trump said in Miami's Little Havana, the cradle of Cuban-American resistance to Castro's government. "Officially, today, they are rejected."

## Helmut Kohl, chancellor who reunited Germany, dies at 87

BERLIN (AP) — Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor whose reunification of a nation divided by the Cold War put Germany at the heart of a united Europe, died Friday at his home in Ludwigshafen. He was 87.

"A life has ended and the person who lived it will go down in history" said German Chancellor Angela Merkel, speaking from Rome. "Helmut Kohl was a great German and a great European."

During his 16 years at the country's helm from 1982 to 1998 — first for West Germany and then all of a united Germany — Kohl combined a dogged pursuit of European unity with a keen instinct for history. Less than a year after the November 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall, he spearheaded the end of Germany's decades-long division into East and West, ushering in a new era in European politics.

"When a new spirit began to sweep through Eastern Europe in the 1980s, when freedom was won in Poland, when brave people in Leipzig, East Berlin and elsewhere in East Germany staged a peaceful revolution, Helmut Kohl was the right person at the right time," said Merkel. "He held fast to the dream and goal of a united Germany, even as others wavered."

It was the close friendships that Kohl built up with other world leaders that helped him persuade both anti-communist Western allies and the leaders of the collapsing Soviet Union that a strong, united Germany could live at peace with its neighbors.



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## Trump acknowledges he's under investigation

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump acknowledged for the first time Friday that he is under federal investigation as part of the expanding probe into Russia's election meddling. He lashed out at a top Justice Department official overseeing the inquiry, reflecting his mounting frustration with the unrelenting controversy that has consumed his early presidency.

"I am being investigated for firing the FBI Director by the man who told me to fire the FBI Director! Witch Hunt," the president wrote on Twitter.

His morning missive apparently referred to Rod Rosenstein, the deputy attorney general whose role leading the federal investigation has become increasingly complicated. The White House has used a memo he wrote to justify Trump's decision to fire FBI Director James Comey, but that Trump action may now be part of the probe. Thursday night, Rosenstein issued an unusual statement complaining about leaks in the case.

Trump advisers and confidants describe the president as increasingly angry over the investigation, yelling at television sets in the White House carrying coverage and insisting he is the target of a conspiracy to discredit — and potentially end — his presidency. Some of his ire is aimed at Rosenstein and investigative special counsel Robert Mueller, both of whom the president believes are biased against him, associates say.

Dianne Feinstein, top Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee, said she was "increasingly concerned" that Trump will fire both Mueller and Rosenstein.

"The message the president is sending through his tweets is that he believes the rule of law doesn't apply to him and that anyone who thinks otherwise will be fired," Feinstein said. "That's undemocratic on its face and a blatant violation of the president's oath of office."

Aides have counseled the president to stay off Twitter and focus on other aspects of his job.

They have tried to highlight the positive reviews he received Wednesday when he made a statesman-like appearance in the White House to address the nation after Rep. Steve Scalise was shot during a congressional baseball practice.

Yet Trump's angry tweets on Friday underscored the near-impossible challenge his advisers and legal team have in trying to get him to avoid weighing in on an active probe.

The president has denied that he has any nefarious ties to Russia and has also disputed that he's attempted to block the investigation into his campaign's possible role in Russia's



AP Photo/Susan Walsh  
President Donald Trump walks with National Security Adviser H.R. McMaster to Marine One on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington, Friday.

election-related hacking.

It was unclear whether his tweet about being under investigation was based on direct knowledge or new media reports that suggest Mueller is examining whether the president obstructed justice by firing Comey.

The tweets came shortly after Rosenstein issued his unusual statement that appeared to be warning about the accuracy of such reports.

"Americans should be skeptical about anonymous allegations," Rosenstein said. "The Department of Justice has a long-established policy to neither confirm nor deny such allegations."

The department would not comment on the record on whether Trump, who has repeatedly complained about leaks on the case, requested the statement. But a department official said no one asked for the statement and Rosenstein acted on his own.

The official demanded anonymity because the official was not authorized to be named discussing the deliberations.

Trump has told associates he has the legal authority to fire Mueller. What is clear is that he could order the Justice Department to ax Mueller, which may result in Rosenstein's departure and would certainly intensify the uproar over the investigation.

Though some in the White House have preached caution, fearing a repeat of the firestorm over Comey's firing, many in Trump's orbit — including his son Donald Trump Jr. and adviser Newt Gingrich — have deemed Mueller biased and worthy of dismissal.

Several White House officials and Trump associates insisted on anonymity in order to discuss the president's views of the unfolding investigation.

Rosenstein has been overseeing

the Russia probe since shortly after Attorney General Jeff Sessions recused himself. But Rosenstein, too, may ultimately have to hand off oversight given his role in Trump's decision to fire Comey.

Earlier this month, Rosenstein told The Associated Press that "if anything that I did winds up being relevant to his investigation then, as Director Mueller and I discussed, if there's a need from me to recuse, I will."

Trump's tweets came after the top lawyer for his transition team warned the organization's officials to preserve all records and other materials related to the Russia probe. An official of Trump's transition confirmed the lawyer's internal order, which was sent Thursday.

The order from the general counsel for the transition team casts a wide net on documents that could shed light on ties between Trump's presidential campaign and representatives of Russia's government.

The order also covers separate inquiries into several key Trump associates including former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, campaign adviser Paul Manafort, foreign policy aide Carter Page and outside adviser Roger Stone.


The White House has directed questions for details to outside legal counsel, which has not responded.

Vice President Mike Pence has also hired a private lawyer to represent his interests in the expanding probe. Pence headed the Trump transition until Inauguration Day.

Trump's personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, also has retained an attorney to represent him. Cohen has worked for Trump since the mid-2000s and was active in the campaign. He has already been subpoenaed by the House intelligence committee.

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