

Officer Won't Face Charges In Killing

CLEVELAND (AP) — A grand jury Monday declined to indict a white rookie police officer in the killing of 12-year-old Tamir Rice, a black youngster who was shot while playing with what turned out to be a pellet gun.

In explaining the decision, Cuyahoga County prosecutor Tim McGinty said it was “indisputable” that the boy was drawing the pistol from his waistband when he was gunned down. McGinty said Tamir was trying to either hand the weapon over to police or show them it wasn’t real, but the officer and his partner had no way of knowing that.

“Simply put, given this perfect storm of human error, mistakes and miscommunications by all involved that day, the evidence did not indicate criminal conduct by police,” McGinty said. He said patrolman Timothy Loehmann was justified in opening fire: “He had reason to fear for his life.”

Tamir’s family condemned the decision but echoed the prosecutor in urging those disappointed to express themselves “peacefully and democratically.” Barricades were set up outside a Cleveland courthouse in case of protests, and about two dozen people gathered in the cold rain at the recreation center where Tamir was shot, some holding signs with photos of the boy and others killed by police in the U.S.

A grainy surveillance-camera video of the boy’s November 2014 shooting provoked outrage nationally, and together with other killings of black people by police in places such as Ferguson, Missouri, and New York City, it helped fuel the Black Lives Matter movement.

Chicago Police Crisis Training Criticized

CHICAGO (AP) — In the wake of another police shooting, Mayor Rahm Emanuel called for an immediate review of how the Chicago Police Department trains officers to respond to calls involving people in crisis or with mental health problems.

But advocates for what’s known as crisis intervention team training say Chicago’s program has been “starved” of resources, with only about 15 percent of officers completing the 40-hour course. Advocates say they tried to get meetings with Emanuel early in his first term to stress the importance of the training and ask the city to invest more in it, but were ignored. Illinois’ budget crisis also created a lapse, not just in Chicago but elsewhere.

The issue resurfaced last weekend, after officers responding to a domestic disturbance shot and killed a 19-year-old man and a 55-year-old woman. The deaths of Bettie Jones — who police say was accidentally hit by gunfire — and Quintonio LeGrier occurred just weeks after the Department of Justice opened a civil-rights investigation into Chicago police practices.

South Korea, Japan Reach WWII Accord

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — An apology from Japan’s prime minister and a pledge of more than \$8 million sealed a breakthrough deal Monday in a decades-long impasse with South Korea over Korean women forced into Japanese military-run brothels during World War II.

The accord, which aims to resolve the emotional core of South Korea’s grievances with its former colonial overlord, could begin to reverse decades of animosity and mistrust between the two thriving democracies, trade partners and staunch U.S. allies. It represents a shift for Tokyo’s conservative government and a new willingness to compromise by previously wary Seoul.

A statement by both countries’ foreign ministers said Prime Minister Shinzo Abe “expresses anew his most sincere apologies and remorse to all the women who underwent immeasurable and painful experiences and suffered incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women,” the euphemistic name given the women.

Historians say tens of thousands of women from around Asia, many of them Korean, were sent to front-line military brothels to provide sex to Japanese soldiers.

It wasn’t immediately clear if Abe would be issuing a separate written statement or if it would be directly delivered to the 46 surviving former Korean sex slaves, now in their 80s and 90s.

Cruz Taps Into Evangelicals, Tea Partiers

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — When Republican presidential hopeful Ted Cruz first ran for U.S. Senate in Texas, the only thing lower than his name recognition was the expectation that he’d win.

Then the state solicitor general, Cruz amassed a coalition anchored by tea party conservatives and evangelicals on his way to defeating a sitting lieutenant governor who entered the primary with the financial and organizational muscle of the GOP establishment.

Now Cruz is trying to take the model nationwide, even as some of his White House rivals, especially Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, compete for the same voters in a scrambled GOP race.

The son of a Southern Baptist preacher, Cruz will continue his efforts this week with a two-day meeting at a remote Texas ranch that began Monday and was expected to bring together about 300 Christian leaders and key financial backers for a fundraiser.

Some are already supporting him, while others are undecided, Cruz said.

Relatives Of Drowned Boy In Canada

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Relatives of a Syrian boy whose lifeless body washed up on a Turkish beach, sparking worldwide concern for the refugee crisis, have landed in Canada.

Mohammed Kurdi, his wife and their five children arrived in Canada as refugees on Monday, sponsored by Mohammed’s sister Tima Kurdi, who wiped away tears as she greeted her relatives at Vancouver airport’s arrival gates.

Speaking through his sister, who translated from Arabic, Mohammed Kurdi thanked Canadians and the government for making his dream come true.

“I’m happy! Very happy!” he said in English to a crowd of reporters gathered around the family.

His teenage son Shergo said he was looking forward to going back to school and starting a new life.

Boko Haram Attacks Nigerian City, Town,

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria (AP) — Boko Haram Islamic extremists struck a city and a town in northeastern Nigeria with rocket-propelled grenades and multiple suicide bombers Monday, killing at least 80 people, witnesses said.

In Maiduguri, the capital of Borno state, at least 30 were killed and more than 90 wounded in overnight blasts and shootouts, and another 20 died in a bombing outside a mosque at dawn Monday, said Muhammed Kanar, area coordinator of the National Emergency Management Agency.

A twin suicide bombing also killed at least 30 people in Madagali, a town 150 kilometers (95 miles) southeast of Maiduguri, witnesses said. Danladi Buba said two women blew themselves up at a market near a busy bus station at about 9 a.m. Brig. Gen. Victor Ezugwu, the officer commanding in northeast Adamawa State, confirmed the attack but said casualties have yet to be established.

The attacks appear to be a challenge to President Muhammadu Buhari’s declaration last week that Nigerian security forces have “technically won the war” against Boko Haram and that it is now capable of no more than suicide bombings on soft targets.

Maiduguri, with a population of about 1 million people, now hosts almost as many refugees — among the 2.5 million people driven from their homes in the 6-year-old Islamic uprising. About 20,000 people have been killed in Nigeria and hundreds others elsewhere as the insurgents have carried their conflict across its borders into Cameroon, Niger and Chad.



G.J. MCCARTHY/DALLAS MORNING NEWS/TNS
An aerial photograph of tornado damage shot on Monday in Glenn Heights, Texas. Violent storms ripped through the North Texas area late Saturday, spawning tornadoes that killed 11 people.

Texas Cleans Up After Twister Outbreak

Mix Of Snow And Ice Slogs Across The Midwest

BY DAVID WARREN
Associated Press

GARLAND, Texas — Jacqui Gordon spent Monday sifting through the debris that had been her home, searching for old family photographs — especially of her father, who died two years ago.

She and nine others were enjoying a holiday gathering when winds began to rattle her home in suburban Dallas. They all dashed into closets and suffered only bumps and bruises, but Gordon’s roof was torn away and her house destroyed.

“I just got divorced, and this is all I had,” she said.

With rain all day Sunday keeping people away, residents worked on a dreary and frigid Monday to salvage what they could, with the American Red Cross distributing items like tarps, rakes and work gloves to help them.

At least 11 people died and dozens were injured in the tornadoes that swept through the Dallas area Saturday. Snow from New Mexico through the Midwest, plus flooding in Arkansas, Missouri and Illinois, added to the succession of severe weather events across the country in the last week that led to about four dozen deaths.

The storm system brought heavy snow, ice and blustery winds to several states in the nation’s midsection, as well as heavy rain in already-waterlogged areas.

More than 2,100 flights across the U.S. were canceled Monday — more than half of them at Chicago’s two main airports — and 3,700 were delayed, according to flight-tracking service FlightAware. A typical day sees about 150 cancellations and 4,000 delays.

Highways turned icy and treacherous in New Mexico, while Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin declared a state of emergency after blizzard conditions affected parts of the state and heavy rains fell.

The Oklahoma Highway Patrol said the body of a 22-year-old man was recovered in northern Oklahoma but a second man, the lead singer of the country-rock band Backroad Anthem, was still missing after the two went duck hunting and their boat capsized. The

body of a 36-year-old man who tried to cross a creek in his pickup near the town of Arpelar, was also recovered Monday afternoon, the patrol said.

Officials in Arkansas said a 31-year-old man died in a storm-related drowning.

Several inches of rain caused flooding in Illinois and Missouri, where Gov. Jay Nixon also declared a state of emergen-

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DEBRALEE KING

cy. Nixon says the state’s death toll from days of pounding rainfall has risen to 10, and he expects that number to grow.

The Mississippi River neared a potential record crest, after an unusual amount of late-fall rain had the river already high before torrential downpours that began Saturday.

Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant said Monday the state is seeking a federal disaster declaration for some or all of the seven counties hit by a tornado last week. Authorities in Georgia said they recovered the body of a man whose car was swept away when floodwaters overtook it.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott made disaster declarations Sunday for four counties — Dallas, Collin, Rockwall and Ellis. Officials estimated as many as 1,450 homes in North Texas were damaged or destroyed by at least nine tornadoes.

The National Weather Service has said an EF-4 tornado, which is the second-most powerful with winds up to more than 200 mph, hit Garland. Eight people died there, 15 were injured and more than 600 structures, mostly single-family homes, were damaged.

“I’ve never seen anything like this, with this scale of destruction,” Police Chief Mitch Bates said Monday.

He said authorities believe all eight of the tornado victims there, which included a 1-year-old, died when their vehicles were thrown from overpasses in the area of Interstate 30 and the

George Bush Turnpike, a major route in the region.

North of Dallas in Collin County, neighbors and emergency responders had tried to save a tiny victim of the powerful storms.

Debralee King said she was in her yard assessing the damage when she heard a neighbor’s scream and saw Jose Daniel Santillano appear with his newborn daughter. She said Santillano asked her to take the girl to the hospital, and she headed out with another neighbor.

“I kept saying, ‘Oh, my God. Be OK, baby. Be OK,’” King recalled. “Her little hand was cold. I kept praying.”

King and local authorities say they found a game warden who performed CPR until an ambulance arrived — but the infant didn’t survive.

Both the husband and wife were hospitalized Monday. The family’s trailer was blown off its base.

“It’s bad enough that the tornado took their home,” King said. “But to take the baby, too, that’s wrong.”

Interstate 40, the main east-west highway across the Panhandle, reopened Monday morning. After a standstill of several hours, traffic began moving slowly where Interstate 10 splits into Interstate 20 in West Texas. Most other roads across West Texas and the Panhandle had also reopened by late Monday, although snow-packed roads and ice made driving hazardous.

Vito Randazzo of California said he sat on I-10 for about 13 hours and people were sleeping in their cars. Around 9 a.m. Monday he was able to see to drive across a median and get onto a service road.

A shopping mall in Lubbock, which got about a foot of snow, was closed after heavy snow collapsed part of the center’s roof. No injuries were reported.

Associated Press reporters Scott Mayerowitz in New York; Jamie Stengle in Dallas; Reese Dunklin in Blue Ridge, Michael Graczyk in Houston; Paul J. Weber in Austin, Texas; and Jill Bleed in Little Rock, Arkansas, contributed to this report.

Iraqi Troops Advance In Ramadi

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraqi forces backed by U.S.-led airstrikes drove Islamic State militants out of the center of Ramadi on Monday and seized the main government complex there, according to military officials, who said insurgents are still dug into pockets of the city west of Baghdad.

Ramadi, the provincial capital of the sprawling Anbar province, fell to IS in May, marking a major setback for Iraqi forces and the U.S.-led campaign. Ramadi and nearby Fallujah, which is controlled by IS, saw some of the heaviest fighting of the eight-year U.S. intervention in Iraq.

In recent months Iraqi forces launched several offensives to retake Ramadi, but all had stalled. Iraqi troops began advancing into some parts of the city, located about 130 kilometers (80 miles) west of Baghdad, earlier this month. But their progress was slowed by snipers, booby traps and the militants’ destruction of bridges leading into the city center.

The heavy fighting and limited access to front-lines made it difficult to follow the troops’ progress, and Iraqi officials issued a string of sometimes contradictory statements.

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