

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 6 JANUARY 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

[Court clears Sikh men to attend Marine boot camp with beards](#) [Nicolas Slayton, *Task & Purpose*, 27 December 2022]

Two Sikh men can keep their beards when they enlist in the Marine Corps, according to a federal appeals court. Jaskirat Singh and Milaap Singh Chahal are cleared to attend Marine Corps boot camp, per a Dec. 23 ruling from an appeals court in Washington, D.C. Three judges granted a preliminary injunction in the case. Singh and Singh Chahal along with Aekash Singh, filed a lawsuit in April 2022, arguing they faced an “unconstitutional choice” to go against their faith to serve.

[DOD Begins Implementing Naming Commission Recommendations](#) [Jim Garamone, *DOD News*, 5 January 2023]

The Naming Commission process is now over and the names of bases, posts, ships, streets and more named after Confederate soldiers will change. William A. LaPlante, the undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment, today directed all DOD organizations to begin full implementation of the Commission on the Naming of Items of the Department of Defense recommendations. LaPlante acted at the end of a 90-day waiting period that began after the Naming Commission released its third and final report in September.

[\[DOD MEMO\]](#)

[First Active-Duty Woman Earns Master Gunner Badge for Army’s Abrams Tanks](#) [Drew F. Lawrence, *Military.com*, 3 January 2023]

The first female active-duty soldier ever to graduate from a prestigious heavy armor course passed and graduated last month, the Army announced right before the calendar flipped to the new year. Sgt. Cinthia Ramirez, a soldier at Fort Hood’s 1st Cavalry Division, passed the M1A2 Abrams Master Gunner Course, a 43-day school that teaches noncommissioned officers how to be weapons experts in heavy armored units across the Army.

[Murray becomes first female president pro tempore in Senate](#) [Mary Clare Jalonick, *The Associated Press*, 4 January 2023]

When Washington Sen. Patty Murray was elected to the Senate in 1992, she says, male senators treated her with some trepidation. But now she has outlasted almost all of them, becoming the first woman appointed president pro tempore—a senior member of the majority who presides over the Senate and is third in line to the presidency. Murray was elected in what was called the “year of the woman,” but when she came to the Senate she found there were still very few women at all.

[New in 2023: A woman-led Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon](#) [Irene Loewenson, *Marine Corps Times*, 28 December 2022]

When the Marine Corps’ elite Silent Drill Platoon begins its busy parade season in late spring 2023, a woman will be in charge for the first time. Capt. Kelsey M. Hastings assumed command of the 24-person platoon, one of the Marine Corps’ most prestigious ceremonial units, on Nov. 21. The Silent Drill Platoon often is “the face of the Marine Corps, showing the world how elite and professional our organization is, and being selected to lead them is truly an honor. I look forward to working with my new Marines and being a face that a little girl can see and envision herself as.”

CULTURE

[American Girl makes history with its first South Asian Girl of the Year doll](#) [Brahmjot Kaur, *NBC News*, 30 December 2022]

American Girl unveiled its 2023 Girl of the Year on Thursday, and in a brand first, the title goes to a South Asian doll. “As we ring in a new year, we’re excited to have Kavi Sharma take center stage in our popular Girl of the Year lineup,” Jamie Cygielman, general manager of American Girl, said in a news release. “Just like all our beloved characters, Kavi’s culturally relevant and aspirational stories help inspire kids to shine bright in their own way and be proud of who they are.”

[Houston Post Office to Be Renamed to Honor Army Spc. Vanessa Guillén](#) [Patricia Kime, *Military.com*, 29 December 2022]

A Houston post office will soon bear the name of a woman who became the face of the #MeToo movement for the U.S. armed services. The Vanessa Guillén Post Office Building in southeast Houston will honor the Army private first class who disappeared in April 2020 from Fort Hood, Texas, shortly after telling her family she was being sexually harassed by a noncommissioned officer. She was found dead two months later, killed by a fellow soldier over a separate incident.

DISCRIMINATION

[Court: Teacher wearing MAGA hat fell under protected speech](#) [The Associated Press, 4 January 2023]

*The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled in favor of a former teacher in Vancouver, Washington, concluding that his wearing a hat supporting former President Donald Trump to school was protected speech under the First Amendment. Court documents show that science teacher Eric Dodge brought the “Make America Great Again” baseball cap with him to an Evergreen Public Schools building twice before the 2019-2020 school year. The *Columbian* [reported](#) the first occasion was to a staff-only cultural sensitivity and racial bias training*

[“Not just the ramp.” Worship spaces need more accessibility](#) [Holly Meyer, *The Associated Press*, 29 December 2022]

Jerry Lamb could not maneuver his wheelchair into the rows of pews at his church. It wouldn’t fit. Nor could he sit in the aisles without awkwardly blocking the way. So he adapted. It’s a regular part of his new life with limited mobility that requires near-constant calculations of how to navigate a world no longer set up for him. That included his longtime church in Camden, Tennessee—one of the many U.S. houses of worship with accessibility limitations.

[West Virginia can keep its ban against transgender school athletes, a judge says](#) [Leah Willingham, *The Associated Press*, 6 January 2023]

West Virginia’s ban on transgender athletes competing in female school sports is constitutional and can remain in place, a federal judge ruled Thursday. “I recognize that being transgender is natural and is not a choice,” U.S. District Court Judge Joseph Goodwin wrote in his decision. “But one’s sex is also natural, and it dictates physical characteristics that are relevant to athletics.” The American Civil Liberties Union and its West Virginia chapter filed the lawsuit in 2021 on behalf of an 11-year-old transgender girl who hoped to compete in middle school cross-country in Harrison County.

DIVERSITY

[AFMC partnership drives progress in mentoring, diversity](#) [Marisa Alia-Novobilski, *Air Force News Service*, 5 January 2023]

A unique partnership between two Air Force Materiel Command personnel teams continues to progress both mentoring and diversity goals across the enterprise. More than 2,500 uniformed and civilian Airmen and Guardians participated in a series of Cross-Cultural Mentoring Panels in 2022, which emphasized inclusivity, growth and greater understanding of mentoring relationships across all demographic groups.

EXTREMISM

[Antisemitic message projected on building in Florida](#) [*The Associated Press*, 4 January 2023]

An antisemitic message was projected onto a downtown building in Orlando, Florida, during the city's New Year's Eve celebrations. Police said Wednesday that investigators are trying to determine who is responsible. Downtown Orlando attracted thousands of revelers welcoming in 2023 on Saturday night.

[The Jan. 6 Committee Report and the Legacy of the Insurrection](#) [Adam Butler and Ross Gianfortune, *Government Executive*, 4 January 2023]

Before the new Congress was seated this week, the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol wrapped up its business by releasing its 800-plus-page report and hundreds of interview transcripts. With the second anniversary of the attack upcoming and recent intelligence community warnings of domestic extremism, the committee's findings are as important as ever.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Marines Boot Recruit with Apparent Neo-Nazi Ties from Delayed-Entry Program](#) [Konstantin Toropin, *Military.com*, 5 January 2023]

The Marine Corps said that it discharged a recruit from its delayed-entry program after he admitted to having a history of membership in neo-Nazi groups. Christopher Semok enlisted in the Marines on Sept. 21, 2022, the service said. That enlistment seemed to come after a long history of antisemitic activity and Nazi-driven vandalism that was documented by various anti-fascist groups online.

[New Year's Eve attack on New York police linked to Islamist extremism](#) [Kanishka Singh, *Reuters*, 3 January 2023]

The teenager accused of attacking three policemen with a machete on New Year's Eve near Times Square and charged with attempted murder was linked to Islamist extremism, a senior New York City Police Department official said on Tuesday. The FBI interviewed the suspect, Trevor Bickford, last month in Maine after his mother reported her concern that her son was possibly becoming radicalized, Galati said. Agents determined that Bickford wanted to fight in Afghanistan and placed him on a federal watch list to prevent him from traveling overseas.

HUMAN RELATIONS

[A Personal-Growth Strategy for Effective Leadership](#) [Andrew Feldman, *Government Executive*, 28 December 2022]

Maybe you need to be more humble, patient, truthful, grateful, empathetic, direct or courageous. Maybe you need to go to sleep earlier, be more prompt to meetings or be more organized. Whatever your challenges, you're in good company: Most of us have many things we can improve about ourselves. When we're proactive about making those improvements, we not only experience personal growth but we become more effective leaders and managers within our departments and agencies.

[Why you should give the gift of mindfulness this New Year](#) [Jeremy David Engels, *The Conversation*, 3 January 2023]

The start of another year can feel magical to many of us. Even though the days remain short and dark, the flip of the calendar can make it seem new beginnings with new resolutions are possible. Mindfulness scholars and teachers like me call resolutions "habit breakers," as they can overcome patterns that no longer serve individuals. However, research suggests that many resolutions fail by the end of January. But a key to ensuring that resolutions stick is to choose one that will make a meaningful difference in your life. Seeing a real, tangible benefit can provide inspiration to keep going when all of life is telling us to let things go back to how they were before.

INTERNATIONAL

[British Museum says in "constructive" discussions over Parthenon marbles](#) [Reuters, 4 January 2023]

The British Museum said on Wednesday it was holding "constructive discussions" with Greece over the Parthenon Sculptures amid renewed speculation that the 2,500-year-old marbles could soon be returned to Athens. Greece has repeatedly called for the permanent return of the sculptures that British diplomat Lord Elgin removed from the imposing Parthenon temple in Athens in the early 19th century, when he was ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, which then ruled Greece.

[Cuba: Women boxers allowed to compete after rule change](#) [Will Grant, *BBC News*, 3 January 2023]

For Joanna Rodriguez, a recent rule change by the Cuban authorities to finally allow women to compete in boxing couldn't come soon enough. "This (new rule) is going to change everything," says Joanna after a grueling training session in a dingy gym in Central Havana. "It could even shift the way of thinking because there is machismo among both men and women here."

[Gay couples in India ask Supreme Court to legalise same-sex marriage](#) [Arpan Chaturvedi and Rupam Jain, *Reuters*, 22 December 2022]

Four gay couples have asked India's Supreme Court to recognise same-sex marriages, setting the stage for a legal face-off with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government which has in the past refused to legalise such marriages. In a historic verdict in 2018, India's top court decriminalised homosexuality by scrapping a colonial-era ban on gay sex. Despite the 2018 ruling, members of India's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community complain about a lack of acceptance and discrimination against gay people in Indian society.

MISCELLANEOUS

[DOD Expands Military Parental Leave Program](#) [DOD News, 4 January 2023]

Today, the Department of Defense announced the expansion of the Military Parental Leave Program (MPLP) via Directive-type [Memorandum 23-001](#)—"Expansion of the Military Parental Leave Program." Specifically, the expansion provides parental leave to active and reserve component service

members (on active duty for 12 months or more) who have given birth, adopted a child or had a child placed for adoption or long-term foster care with them. Birth parents will be granted 12 weeks of parental leave following a period of convalescent leave and non-birth parents will be granted 12 weeks of leave following the birth of their child. Adoptive parents and eligible foster parents will also be granted 12 weeks of parental leave.

[Intel agency IT leaders prioritize accessibility in technology](#) [Justin Doubleday, *Federal News Network*, 4 January 2023]

The National Security Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency and other intelligence components are prioritizing a shift toward making their technology more accessible for employees with disabilities, spurred on not just by accessibility requirements but by workforce demands. And intelligence community IT leaders have a message for the vendor community: take accessibility seriously when you develop products and services for spy agencies.

MISCONDUCT

[No Action Taken Against Army Officer After Public Dustup with Tucker Carlson over Women Serving](#) [Steve Beynon, *Military.com*, 3 January 2023]

The Army took no action against Maj. Gen. Patrick Donahoe and allowed him to retire Sunday, ending a controversy after the service began an investigation into the armor officer's conduct online following posts in which he took a stance against Fox News' Tucker Carlson's disparaging comments about female soldiers.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

RELIGION

[Christian graves desecrated in historic Jerusalem cemetery](#) [Isabel Debre, *The Associated Press*, 5 January 2023]

More than 30 graves at a historic Christian cemetery in Jerusalem were found toppled and vandalized, the diocese said Wednesday, jolting the Christian minority in the contested city. Israel's Foreign Ministry called the attack an "immoral act" and "an affront to religion." Jerusalem's Anglican Archbishop Hosam Naoum called it a "clear hate crime." The British consulate said it was just the latest in a string of assaults on the Christian community in the holy city of Jerusalem.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[New in 2023: Independent sexual assault prosecutions coming soon](#) [Meghann Myers, *Military Times*, 29 December 2022]

The services are set to implement a huge change to the military justice system that's been about a decade in the making: the creation of an independent special victim's prosecution office, empowered to make decisions on filing charges and sending cases to trial without a unit commander's sign-off. The Defense Department has until the end of 2023 to fully implement this new trial counsel organization dedicated specifically to handling sexual assault, domestic violence, murder, manslaughter and other major crimes.

[Telehealth Brings Expert Sexual Assault Exams to Rural Patients](#) [Arielle Zionts, *Kaiser Health News*, 3 January 2023]

Amanda Shelley was sitting in her dentist’s waiting room when she received a call from the police. A local teenage girl had been sexually assaulted and needed an exam. Shelley, a nurse in rural Eagle County, Colorado, went to her car and called a telehealth company to arrange an appointment with a sexual assault nurse examiner, or SANE. The service, known as “teleSANE,” is new at Shelley’s hospital. Before, sexual assault patients faced mountains of obstacles—literally—when they had to travel to a hospital in another county for care.

[“Whisper networks” thrive when women lose faith in formal systems of reporting sexual harassment](#) [Carrie Ann Johnson, *The Conversation*, 4 January 2023]

Whisper networks—informal channels that women use to warn others about sexual harassment, abuse or assault—take root because formal reporting systems can re-traumatize people who have been harmed. That’s what I found while conducting research on this topic for my dissertation. These networks form when women are determined to protect each other once they learn of misconduct, because their experience has shown them that formally reporting incidents is slow and generally doesn’t work.

SUICIDE

[In wake of Navy suicides, what military has—and hasn’t—done to improve its mental health services](#) [Caitlyn Burchett, *The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, Va.)*, 3 January 2023]

Norfolk-based Navy installations reported seven sailors died by suicide last year, renewing concern about the progress of efforts to improve mental health services and suicide intervention within the military. Lawmakers are now prioritizing implementation of one key piece of legislation, which was signed into law by President Joe Biden in 2021 but has yet to take effect. The Brandon Act would allow service members to confidentially seek mental health care.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

VETERANS

[Tony Vaccaro, 100, Dies; Photographed War From a Soldier’s Perspective](#) [Richard Goldstein, *The New York Times*, 30 December 2022]

Private Vaccaro spent 272 days in combat with the 83rd Infantry Division, which fought its way from Normandy to Germany. Along with the M-1 rifle he carried across Europe, he kept a small 35-millimeter Argus C3 camera that he had bought as a teenager. Army regulations prohibited soldiers from taking photos unless they were with the Signal Corps. But he managed to capture thousands of images of the war, taken close up. When Mr. Vaccaro died at 100 on Wednesday at his home in the Long Island City section of Queens, he was remembered for his searing photos—most of them unseen for decades after the war’s end—and for his work as a fashion, travel and celebrity photographer for America’s leading magazines.