

NATION/WORLD DIGEST

Syria Ends Emergency Law, But Gains Little

BEIRUT (AP) — Syria did away with 50 years of emergency rule Tuesday, but emboldened and defiant crowds accused President Bashar Assad of simply trying to buy time while he clings to power in one of the most repressive regimes in the Middle East.

Repealing the state of emergency, which gives authorities almost boundless powers of surveillance and arrest, was once the key demand of the monthlong uprising.

But the protest movement has crossed a significant threshold, with increasing numbers now seeking nothing less than the downfall of the regime.

"They don't want to admit there's a Syrian revolution," said one protester in the city of Baniyas, among thousands who took to the streets in several cities and towns across Syria. "The people are not interested in small changes here and there anymore," he said, asking that his name not be published out fear for his personal safety.

Instability in Syria has repercussions beyond its borders. Closed-off Syria punches above its weight in terms of regional influence because of its alliances with militant groups like Lebanon's Hezbollah and with Shiite powerhouse Iran. That has given Damascus a pivotal role in most of the flashpoint issues of the Middle East, from the Arab-Israeli peace process to Iran's widening influence.

Tornado Leaves Raleigh With Deaths, Costs

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — The tornado that carved through North Carolina's capital killed four children, shuttered a university for the rest of the spring semester and felled the signature trees in the metropolis known as the "City of Oaks."

It was the most active system of tornadoes on record in the state's history, leading to 23 deaths in one of the nation's fastest-growing cities. The death toll and property damages underscored the massive costs that can be inflicted when a tornado makes a rare venture into areas of dense population.

In all, the storm killed 45 people in six states, but North Carolina was by far the hardest-hit.

More than three days after the storm, crews struggled Tuesday to restore electricity and infrastructure there, with a key commuting interstate briefly shut down to fix downed power lines.

Outside her apartment in downtown Raleigh, 71-year-old Elsie McKeithan wondered whether residents understood that a tornado could strike an urban area, especially with such ferocity. The storm tore the roof from the three-story apartment where she lived, rain pouring in.

Security Opens Fire On Protests In Yemen

SANAA, Yemen (AP) — Yemeni security forces opened fire on anti-government protesters Tuesday, killing at least three amid rising international concern over the strategically located nation.

The United Nations Security Council met late Tuesday to discuss the deteriorating situation in Yemen, where rights groups say two months of protests calling for the president to step down have claimed 120 lives.

A Yemeni government delegation also headed to nearby Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates, for talks with the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council over a proposal for President Ali Abdullah Saleh to transfer power to his deputy to end the crisis. The opposition held similar talks in Saudi Arabia Sunday.

The country's opposition, inspired by the uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia, says nothing short of Saleh's immediate departure would end the unrest.

Strategically located at the mouth of the Red Sea across from lawless Somalia, Yemen is wracked by rebellions, water and food shortages and hosts a deadly local affiliate of the militant al-Qaida network.

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Obama Rips Republican Plan

President Still Sees Hope For A Debt Deal

BY BEN FELLER

AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON — With America's global credit standing suddenly in question, President Barack Obama insisted Tuesday that Washington has the political will to slash the massive U.S. debt despite fierce, fundamental differences with Republicans about how to do it.

Obama spoke hopefully of compromise with GOP lawmakers, yet still used a campaign-style town hall event to accuse the Republicans of offering a bleak future for the poor, young and elderly with their proposals.

The president seemed intent on assuring financial markets and the watching world that U.S. leaders will get their act together to address a suffocating debt — while at the same time trying to convince voters that only his plan would share the pain fairly.

Republicans didn't sound optimistic about compromise.

House Speaker John Boehner announced Tuesday that he had picked House Majority Leader Eric Cantor to work with a White House commission on cutting spending. But in doing so, Boehner said, "The American people understand we can't keep spending money we don't have. The only ones who don't are

the Democrats running Washington."

More upbeat, Obama said, "Here's the good news: I believe that Democrats and Republicans can come together to get this done." Speaking at Northern Virginia Community College outside Washington, he said, "There will be those who say that we're too divided, that partisanship is too stark. But I'm optimistic."

Obama never mentioned the new context for his comments: a warning that the federal government must rein in its debt or risk losing its sterling credit rating, which could in turn erode the economic recovery. On Monday, Standard and Poor's, a key credit rating agency, lowered its outlook for the government's fiscal health to "negative" amid sliding confidence in Washington's ability to deal with its debt.

The president said that over the past five months — in other words, since Republicans altered the dynamic in Washington by winning control of the House in midterm elections — the two parties have come together to strike some unexpected deals.

However, both of the major agreements happened only under duress: first to prevent a middle-class tax hike, then to avoid a government shutdown.

The optimism Obama expressed about cooperation on the debt was hard to find even

in the cases where both sides were cooperating.

Though the bipartisan debt negotiations, led by Vice President Joe Biden, are to begin on May 5, Republicans in the House and Senate are insisting they won't vote to raise the nation's fast-approaching borrowing limit unless Obama agrees to more spending cuts now.

Longer term, both Obama and the House Republicans have offered plans to trim trillions from yearly deficits over the next decade or so. Fueled in part by an angry populace, Obama and the GOP agree that cutting the nation's debt is essential for growth, stability and the well-being of the next generation. Said Obama on Tuesday: "If we keep on spending more than we take in, it's going to cause serious damage to our economy."

The annual government deficit is projected to be \$1.6 trillion this year and only worsen as the baby boom generation retires and Medicare costs grow.

What's left is an enormous disagreement about how to deal with the imbalance. Obama is traveling across the country this week with his plan for reducing defense spending and health care costs, increasing taxes on the wealthy and protecting priorities he deems untouchable.

His pitch overlaps with the just-beginning 2012 presidential campaign, which could well be defined by this debate over the role of government.

WikiLeaks Suspect Being Moved

LOLITA C. BALDOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Army private suspected of giving classified data to WikiLeaks is being moved to a state-of-the-art facility at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas, where Pentagon officials said more extensive mental, emotional and physical health care will be available.

Jeh Johnson, the Pentagon's top lawyer, said the move does not suggest that Army Pfc. Bradley Manning's treatment at the Marine Corps base at Quantico, Va., was inappropriate.

But the transfer, which Johnson described as "imminent", comes in the wake of international criticism about Manning's treatment during his detention at the Marine Corps base at Quantico. And the conditions of Manning's detention have been the focus of repeated protests from human rights groups and lawmakers.

Johnson, however, said that

"The fact that we have made a decision to transfer this particular pretrial confine ... should not be interpreted as a criticism of the place he was before."

Speaking to reporters Tuesday during a hastily arranged briefing, Johnson and Army Undersecretary Joseph Westphal acknowledged that the brig at Quantico was not designed to hold pretrial detainees for more than a few months.

"This is the right decision, at the right time," said Westphal. "We were looking at a situation where he would need an environment more conducive for a longer detention."

The new facility, they said, will be more open, have more space, and Manning will have a greater opportunity to eat and interact with other prisoners there. They added that the move was in Manning's best interest because Leavenworth's Joint Regional Correctional Facility has a broader array of facilities,

including trained mental, emotional and physical health staff.

Lt. Col. Dawn Hilton, who is in charge of the medium-security detention facility at Leavenworth, said Manning will undergo a comprehensive evaluation upon his arrival to assess whether he is a risk to his own or others' safety. The 150 inmates there — including eight who are awaiting trial — are allowed three hours of recreation per day, she said, and three meals a day in a dining area.

She said the facility, which opened in January, is designed for long-term detention of pretrial inmates. Officials agreed that Manning's case, which involves hundreds of thousands of highly sensitive and classified documents, is very complex and could drag on for months, if not years.

Johnson said that Manning, who has been at Quantico for more than eight months, can be moved now because his inter-

view in the Washington region to determine his competency to stand trial has been completed. That interview lasted one day and was done April 9.

Johnson also said he believes that Manning's lawyer was told about the move Tuesday. The lawyer, David Coombs, did not respond to a request for comment.

Manning faces nearly two dozen charges, including aiding the enemy, a crime that can bring the death penalty or life in prison.

His transfer to Leavenworth comes a bit more than a week after a U.N. torture investigator complained that he was denied a request to make an unmonitored visit to Manning. Pentagon officials said he could meet with Manning, but it is customary to give only the detainee's lawyer confidential visits.

The U.N. official, Juan Mendez, said a monitored conversation would be counter to the practice of his U.N. mandate.

OBITUARIES

Earnest Hahl

Earnest D. Hahl, age 74, of Yankton, passed away Sunday, April 17, 2011 at the Scotland Good Samaritan Center, Scotland, SD.

Funeral services will be 11:00 a.m. Thursday, April 21, 2011 at the 1st Presbyterian Church, Scotland, SD with Rev. Paul Opsahl officiating. Burial will be in the Rosehill Cemetery, Scotland, SD.

Visitations will be 5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday evening at the Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home & Crematory, Yankton, and then one hour prior to the services at the church.

Pallbearers will be David Winckler, Don Woehl, Kevin Hahl, Brian Hahl, Christopher Splett and Ken Splett.

Earnest was born on December 10, 1936 to Joseph & Elizabeth (Blachnik) Hahl in Tabor, SD. He was baptized on October 24, 1937 and confirmed on December 14, 1952. Earnest attended Blaha Grade School near Tyndall, SD through the 8th grade. Ernie then went into farming. He worked for Scotland Dairy Co-op for 16 years. Coyote Sports of Tabor, SD, Baldwin Filters, Yankton, SD and Yankton Transit for six years. He then retired at age 62. He enjoyed



Hahl

working on cars and collecting toy tractors and caterpillars, along with coin banks. He loved being outdoors and will be greatly missed by his family.

Those who will cherish his memory are his wife, Dorothy of Yankton, SD; sons, Darren Hahl of Yankton, SD, Douglas (Kerstin) Hahl of Kearney, NE; daughters, Brenda (Ken) Splett of Freeman, SD and Wanda (Steve) Helgeland of Dell Rapids, SD; daughter-in-law, Pam Hahl of York, NE; brother, Roger (Carol) Hahl of Yankton, SD and nine grandchildren, Christopher Splett of Freeman, SD, Shanna, Alex and Mason Helgeland of Dell Rapids, SD, Alyssa and Joshua Hahl of York, NE, Nathan, Darian and Megan Hahl of Kearney, NE.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
April 20, 2011



Online condolences at:
www.opsahl-kostelfuneralhome.com

Walfred 'Coppo' Heckenlaible

FREEMAN — Walfred "Coppo" Heckenlaible of Freeman died Sunday (April 17, 2011) in Las Vegas.

Funeral service arrangements are pending with Walter Funeral Home, Freeman.

Richard Saylor

MENNO — Richard Saylor, 96, of Menno died Tuesday (April 19, 2011) at the Good Samaritan Center, Scotland.

Arrangements are pending with Aisenbrey-Opsahl-Kostel Memorial Chapel, Menno.

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Big Friend Little Friend Thanks You For A Successful 15th Annual Bowl-A-thon

On behalf of the Big Friend Little Friend, Inc we gratefully acknowledge your participation in the 15th Annual Bowl-A-Thon. Because of your generosity and volunteerism, we are able to further our mission in bettering the lives of children across all of the Yankton Community.



Every child should have the opportunity, confidence, character and support needed to lead a safe, healthy and productive life. They have a right to expect a fair chance to develop their talents and apply their energies in order to successfully contribute to society. Studies consistently show that the best hope for young people comes from mentoring.

Mentors make a difference every day.

Again, thank you for supporting our 15th Annual Bowl-A-Thon and for allowing a fun day of bowling fun for all the Yankton Community kids. We appreciate all you do for our program and the youth who are able to participate in mentoring programs!

Thank You,
Stacy Winterringer, Executive Director

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& all the Parents!!

Our apologies if we misspelled or omitted your name from the list. Please accept our apology and let us know so we can correct it in our database and make sure that we do not make the same mistake in the future. 605-665-6365.

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