

Syrians Battle In hills Near Lebanon Border

AL-QASR, LEBANON (AP) — Syrian soldiers backed by war-planes battled rebels for control of strategic hilltop villages near the Lebanese border on Friday, as government troops step up counterattacks against opposition forces threatening regime supply lines on the country's frontiers.

Bomb blasts and shots fired into the air to mourn a fallen Syrian government soldier could be heard on the Lebanese side of the border as fighting raged around Qusair, a contested central Syrian town near a key highway between Damascus and the coast.

The battles there came as government forces launched a second offensive against rebels in the province of Daraa on the Jordanian border, where the opposition has been making steady advances in recent weeks.

While President Bashar Assad's forces are stretched thin and much of the country has been allowed to slip into the hands of the rebels, the government is still fighting hard to keep control of airports, seaports, and roads linking them to the capital Damascus that are seen as essential to its survival.

Also on Friday, activists said rebels clashed with troops in the northeastern border city of Qamishli, two kilometers (miles) away from the border with Turkey. Fighting is rare in the predominantly Kurdish and Christian city, where rebels usually maintain a truce with the government.

Man In Custody After Shooting In Virginia Mall

CHRISTIANSBURG, Va. (AP) — A man shot two women at a mall branch of a community college in Virginia Friday before he was subdued by police, a city official said.

One of the victims was airlifted to a hospital and the other was taken by ambulance for treatment, said Christiansburg city spokeswoman Becky Wilbur. Their conditions and identities were not immediately available.

The name of the gunman was not immediately released and a motive for the shootings was not known.

The shootings occurred at a mall in this town of approximately 21,000 in southwestern Virginia that includes a branch campus of New River Community College.

Student Josh Brown said he was working on a computer near the classrooms when the shots were fired.

Native American Masks Sold In French Auction

PARIS (AP) — In a chaotic auction repeatedly interrupted by protests, dozens of Native American tribal masks were sold Friday after a French court ignored the objections of the Hopi tribe and the U.S. government.

The total tally was 931,000 euros (\$1.2 million), with the most expensive, the "Mother Crow," selling for 160,000 euros (\$209,000) — more than three times the pre-sale estimate.

Of the 70 masks up for sale, one was bought by an association to give back to the Hopis, the Drouot auction house said.

Advocates for the Hopi tribe had argued in court the masks have special status and are not art — they represent their dead ancestors' spirits. The Hopis, a Native American tribe whose territory is surrounded by Arizona, nurture the masks as if they are the living dead.

But the auctioneer insisted any move to block the sale could have broad repercussions for the art market in general and potentially force French museums to empty their collections of indigenous works.

Congress Repeals Disclosure Requirements

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress is repealing some financial disclosure requirements for highly paid federal officials enacted a year ago.

An expert panel concluded that publishing details about their personal holdings and transactions in a searchable online database poses a national security risk and exposes the officials to identity theft.

The House unanimously passed a bill Friday doing away with the on-line filing requirements except for the president, vice president, members of Congress, Cabinet officers and other officials appointed by the president, and candidates for president or Congress. The Senate passed it by voice vote Thursday evening. The bill goes to President Barack Obama.

Making congressional aides and other federal employees paid more than \$119,554 put their financial data online was part of a law aimed at curbing the perception that lawmakers were trading on insider information.

Measures Put Moderate Senate Dems In Bind

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama's push for tougher gun measures and expanded background checks is putting several moderate Senate Democrats in a bind, forcing them to take sides on a deeply personal issue for rural voters.

The Senate is scheduled to begin weeks of discussion over gun control legislation pushed by Democrats in response to the deadly Newtown, Conn., elementary school shooting.

The debate will bring intense scrutiny to five Senate Democrats facing re-election in 2014 in states carried by Republican Mitt Romney last year. The Democrats represent Alaska, Arkansas, Louisiana, Montana and North Carolina.

The National Rifle Association has opposed the expansion of background checks, while gun control advocates point to the changes as one way to curb gun violence.

On The Brink Of Missile Test, U.S. Stresses Limits Of North Korea's Nuclear Firepower

BY ROBERT BURNS
AND KIMBERLY DOZIER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — On the brink of an expected North Korean missile test, U.S. officials focused on the limits of Pyongyang's nuclear firepower Friday, trying to shift attention from the disclosure that the North Koreans might be able to launch a nuclear strike. They insisted that while the unpredictable government might have rudimentary nuclear capabilities, it has not proved it has a weapon that could reach the United States.

A senior defense official said the U.S. sees a "strong likelihood" that North Korea will launch a test missile in coming days in defiance of international calls for restraint. The effort is expected to test the North's ballistic missile technologies, not a nuclear weapon, said the official, who was granted anonymity to discuss intelligence matters.

Unless the missile unexpectedly heads for a U.S. or allied target, the Pentagon does not plan to try to shoot it down, several officials said. As a precaution, the U.S. has arrayed in the Pacific a number of missile defense Navy ships, tracking radars and other elements of its worldwide network for shooting down hostile missiles.

The tensions playing out on the Korean peninsula are the latest in a long-running drama that dates to the 1950-53 Korean War, fed by the North's conviction that Washington is intent on destroying the government in Pyongyang and Washington's worry that the North could, out of desperation, reignite the war by invading the South.

The mood in the North Korean capital, meanwhile, was hardly so tense. Many people were in the streets preparing for the birthday April 15 of national founder Kim Il Sung — the biggest holiday of the year. Even so, this year's big flower show in Kim's honor features an exhibition of orchids built around mock-ups of red-tipped missiles, slogans hailing the military and reminders of perceived threats to the nation.

The plain fact is that no one can be sure how far North Korea has progressed in its pursuit of becoming a full-fledged nuclear power, aside perhaps from a few people close to its new leader, Kim Jong Un.

More is known about North



XINHUA/XINHUA/ZUMA PRESS/MCT
South Korean President Park Geun-hye (left) shakes hands with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry during their meeting at the presidential house in Seoul, South Korea.

Korea's conventional military firepower, and it is being heavily monitored for signs of trouble. The North has long had thousands of artillery guns positioned close enough to the border to hit Seoul with a murderous barrage on short notice. The U.S. has about 28,500 troops in the South.

Concern about the North's threatening rhetoric jumped a notch on Thursday with the disclosure on Capitol Hill that the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency believes with "moderate confidence" that the North could deliver a nuclear weapon by ballistic missile. The DIA assessment did not mention the potential range of such a strike, but it led to a push by administration officials to minimize the significance of the jarring disclosure.

Secretary of State John Kerry said in Seoul on Friday "it's inaccurate to suggest" that the North had fully tested and demonstrated its ability to deliver a nuclear weapon by ballistic missile, a message also delivered by the Pentagon and by James Clapper, the director of national intelligence and a former head of the DIA.

Indeed, the attention-getting DIA report made no such suggestion; it simply offered what amounts to an educated guess that the North has some level of nuclear weapons capability. It has been working on that for at least 20 years, and private analysts who closely track North Korean developments say it's fairly clear that

the North has made progress.

The DIA disclosure spawned a partisan split in Washington over its significance and meaning. A Republican House member with access to classified intelligence said the analysis was in line with a view generally held by other U.S. intelligence agencies, whereas a senior Obama administration official said the central DIA assertion is not shared by many government analysts. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity in order to discuss intelligence.

Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., a member of the House Intelligence Committee, said Friday that members of the committee received an overall briefing on worldwide threats including North Korea this week, but they'll get a more detailed briefing next week.

"I'll be interested to see whether some of the other intelligence community take a different view" than the DIA assessment, he said.

Thomas Fingar, a former deputy director of national intelligence for analysis, said the DIA report reflects the fact that the military plans against worse cases, "so you're prepared for anything less than that."

Fingar, now a Stanford University professor, added, "That's different than judgments about what's 'most likely.' It gets into the subject of 'Is it conceivable?'"

Within the government's 16 intelligence agencies, analysts often disagree on even basic aspects of

Comic Jonathan Winters, Dead At 87

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Jonathan Winters, the cherub-faced comedian whose breakneck improvisations and misfit characters inspired the likes of Robin Williams and Jim Carrey, has died. He was 87.

The Ohio native died Thursday evening at his Montecito, Calif., home of natural causes, said Joe Petro III, a longtime friend. He was surrounded by family and friends.

Winters was a pioneer of improvisational standup comedy, with an exceptional gift for mimicry, a grab bag of eccentric personalities and a bottomless reservoir of creative energy. Facial contortions, sound effects, tall tales — all could be used in a matter of seconds to get a laugh.

"Jonathon Winters was the worthy custodian of a sparkling and childish comedic genius. He did God's work. I was lucky 2 know him," Carrey tweeted on Friday.



On Jack Paar's television show in 1964, Winters was handed a foot-long stick and he swiftly became a fisherman, violinist, lion tamer, canoeist, U.N. diplomat, bullfighter, flutist, delusional psychiatric patient, British headmaster and Bing Crosby's golf club.

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OBITUARIES

Stanley Woods

Stanley Ray Woods, 62, of Tabor died Friday, April 12, 2013, at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital, Yankton, after a courageous battle with cancer.

Funeral services are at 11 a.m. Monday, April 15, at St. John's Lutheran Church, Yankton, with the Rev. Dave Gunderson and the Rev. Steve Weispennig officiating. Burial will be in the ZCBJ Cemetery, Tabor, at approximately 1:15 p.m. Monday afternoon.

Visitations begin at 5 p.m. Sunday at the Opsahl-Kostel Memorial Chapel, Tabor, with a Scripture service at 7 p.m. Visitations will resume one hour prior to the service at the church.

DeWayne Schamber

DeWayne T. Schamber, 76, of Menno died Friday, April 12, 2013, at the Freeman Regional Health Services, Freeman.

Funeral services are pending with the Aisenbrey-Opsahl-Kostel Memorial Chapel, Menno.

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Thank You

The family of **Vera Remington** wishes to express their sincere thank you to Pastor Fallon of St. John's Lutheran Church of Randolph, NE for his terrific celebration of Mom's life and the many visits to see her at Majestic Bluff Nursing Home in Yankton.

Also to Sandra Kuhlman and the ladies of the church circle for organizing and serving a great lunch. To Brad Johnson and staff of the Johnson Funeral Home in Randolph and Steve Wintz and staff of the Wintz & Ray Funeral Home for their services.

To Jim, Kathy, Tracy, Keith, Connie and staff at the Majestic Bluffs Country Unit for your constant care and concern for Mom and making sure her "Blue Bird" was always clean and reassuring of her constant question, "What's my number?"

Thanks to all of our family, friends and neighbors who called, sent flowers, food, and visits during this difficult time. To anyone we may have left out, thank you so much!



Roger & Linda Hora
Louise Matthies

Todd & Jen Hora, Kirby & Cody

Tom & Sheri(Hora) Gause, Mikala & Jax



PRESS&DAKOTAN

Fill the puzzle so that every row, every column, and every section contain the numbers 1-9 without repeating a number.

					6	5
4			8	1		
3					4	
9			1			8
6			9		4	3
	2			8		6
		5				3
			2	6		7
4	1					

CHALLENGING

CH BOOK 45 #1

Yesterday's Solution

6	7	4	1	2	3	9	5	8
5	3	9	6	8	4	7	1	2
2	1	8	7	5	9	4	6	3
1	5	6	4	7	2	8	3	7
4	9	3	8	1	7	6	2	5
8	2	7	3	6	5	1	9	4
3	8	1	5	7	6	2	4	9
7	4	2	9	3	1	5	8	6
9	6	5	2	4	8	3	7	1

su|do|ku

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Check tomorrow's paper for the solution to today's puzzle.

INT BOOK 45 #1



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