

UVA Fraternity May Sue Rolling Stone

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. (AP) — A fraternity at the University of Virginia announced Monday that it will “pursue all available legal action” against *Rolling Stone*, saying a Columbia Journalism School review shows the magazine acted recklessly and defamed its members by publishing an article that falsely accused them of gang rape.

“The *Rolling Stone* article viewed by millions fueled a court of public opinion that ostracized Phi Kappa Psi members and led to vandalism of the fraternity house,” the fraternity’s statement said.

“Clearly our fraternity and its members have been defamed, but more importantly we fear this entire episode may prompt some victims to remain in the shadows, fearful to confront their attackers,” said Stephen Scipione, president of the University of Virginia’s Phi Kappa Psi chapter. “If *Rolling Stone* wants to play a real role in addressing this problem, it’s time to get serious.”

Rolling Stone’s “shock narrative” about sex assaults at the University of Virginia was rife with bad journalism, and the magazine has nobody but its own staff to blame, Columbia Journalism School Dean Steve Coll said Monday at a question and answer session about the review he led at the magazine’s request.

The magazine pledged to review its practices and removed “A Rape on Campus” from its website, but publisher Jann S. Wenner said he won’t fire anyone despite the blistering review. In a *New York Times* interview, Wenner described “Jackie,” whose claims provided the article’s narrative thread, as “a really expert fabulist storyteller” who manipulated the magazine’s journalism process.

Kenya Strikes Against Extremists

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Kenyan warplanes bombed militant camps in Somalia, officials said Monday, following a vow by President Uhuru Kenyatta to respond “in the fiercest way possible” to a massacre of college students by al-Shabab extremists.

The airstrikes Sunday and Monday targeted the Gedo region of western Somalia, directly across the border from Kenya, said Col. David Obonyo of the Kenyan military.

The al-Shabab camps, which were used to store arms and for logistical support, were destroyed, but it was not possible to determine the number of casualties because of poor visibility, he said.

The Somalia-based militant group claimed responsibility for Thursday’s attack at Garissa University College in northeastern Kenya in which militants killed 148 people, most of them students.

Hawa Yusuf, who lives in a village near the town of Beledhawa that is close to the Kenyan-Somali border, said the warplanes “were hovering around for a few minutes, then started bombing.” She didn’t know if there were any casualties, she said by phone.

Clinton Campaign Nearly Rollout

WASHINGTON (AP) — After months of anticipation, Hillary Rodham Clinton is expected to launch her presidential campaign sometime in the next two weeks with an initial focus on intimate events putting her in close contact with voters.

Clinton wants to avoid soaring speeches delivered to big rallies, and the risk they’ll convey the same cloak of inevitability that contributed to her loss in the 2008 Democratic primaries to Barack Obama.

The goal, according to people close to the Clinton organization, is to make her second run for the White House more about voters and less about herself, regardless of her place atop a field of candidates that currently looks far weaker this time around.

“For Secretary Clinton, it’s about being at the level with the people,” said Robert Gibbs, a longtime political adviser to President Obama. “You’re demonstrating to people that you’re on the ground ready to work each and every day for that vote.”

Clinton’s initial events are expected to be held in Iowa and New Hampshire, the first states to vote in the presidential primary contest. Robby Mook, who is slated to serve as Clinton’s campaign manager, and Marlon Marshall, a top incoming campaign aide, traveled to both states last week to meet party activists and longtime Clinton allies.

Marathon Bomber Trial Nears Decision

BOSTON (AP) — As he planted a backpack containing a bomb near a group of children, Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev made a coldblooded decision aimed at punishing America for its wars in Muslim countries, a federal prosecutor told the jury during closing arguments Monday at Tsarnaev’s death penalty trial.

“This was a cold, calculated terrorist act. This was intentional. It was bloodthirsty. It was to make a point,” Aloke Chakravarty said. “It was to tell America that ‘We will not be terrorized by you anymore. We will terrorize you.’”

Defense attorney Judy Clarke countered by arguing, as she did at the trial’s outset, that Tsarnaev took part in the attack but did so under the malevolent influence of his now-dead older brother, Tamerlan. Clarke repeatedly referred to Dzhokhar Tsarnaev — then 19 — as a “kid” and a “teenager.”

“If not for Tamerlan, it would not have happened,” Clarke said.

The jury is expected to begin deliberating Tuesday morning in the case against Tsarnaev, 21, almost two years after the twin bombings near the finish line of the Boston Marathon killed three people and wounded more than 260. It was the nation’s deadliest terror attack since 9/11.



On A Roll In D.C.

One of the great rituals of Easter is the egg hunt, and Washington maintained that observance Monday with the annual Easter egg roll on the South Lawn of the White House. (Olivier Douliery/Abaca Press/TNS)

Obama Ramps Up Lobbying Campaign On Iran Deal

BY JOSH LEDERMAN AND CONNIE CASS
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Facing deep skepticism on multiple fronts, President Barack Obama ramped up lobbying Monday for a framework nuclear deal with Iran, one of the toughest sells of his presidency. Yet critics from Jerusalem to Washington warned they won’t sit idly by while Obama and world leaders pursue a final accord that would leave much of Iran’s nuclear infrastructure intact.

The White House deployed Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz — a nuclear physicist — to offer a scientific defense of a deal that Moniz said would block all Iranian pathways to a nuclear weapon. He described the emerging deal as a “forever agreement,” disputing skeptics who contend it would merely delay Iran’s progress toward a bomb.

“This is not built upon trust,” Moniz said, describing a set of intrusive inspections that would tip off the global community if Iran attempts to cheat. “This is built upon hardened requirements in terms of limitations on what they do, at various timescales, and on the access and transparency.”

Under the agreement, Moniz said, Iran would agree — in perpetuity — to a beefed-up level of inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Other elements of the inspection regimen, such as those dealing with storage and mining of nuclear materials, would end sooner. And Moniz acknowledged that over time, some restrictions on Iran’s nuclear activities might be eased if the world gains confidence that its program is being operated for purely peaceful purposes.

Skeptics of Obama’s diplomatic outreach to Iran were undeterred.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., just



Obama

back from the Middle East, questioned why Iran would be allowed to retain more than 6,000 centrifuges — despite

Obama’s earlier suggestion that he was pursuing a deal that would end Iran’s nuclear program, not simply shrink it.

“The parameters of the interim deal, in essence, establish an internationally recognized, 10-year nuclear research and development program,” McConnell said.

The strongest international criticism has come from Israel, where leaders consider the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran a threat to their nation’s survival. Israel’s minister for strategic affairs, Yuval Steinitz, said military action against Iran’s nuclear program remains an option. He said Israel would spend the coming months lobbying for stronger language in the final agreement.

In Washington, members of Congress from both parties have raised concerns about the pace at which U.S. and international sanctions on Iran would be lifted in exchange for rolling back its nuclear program.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said Iran continues to press publicly for a deal that would lift all sanctions immediately. The U.S. and its negotiating partners — Russia, China, France, the U.K. and Germany — have been pushing for phased-in sanctions relief. But the fact that such a key matter was left unsettled in the framework deal has fueled further doubts about the negotiations, which are supposed to be concluded by June 30.

Lawmakers are pushing to give Congress a say in whether the agreement should stand. Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Bob Corker, R-Tenn., is pressing legislation that would not only let lawmakers vote to approve or reject the bill, but would also prevent Obama from using his own

authority to temporarily waive existing U.S. sanctions while Congress debates the deal.

The Foreign Relations panel plans to vote on the measure next week. With support assured from nearly all Republicans, the bill would need only a handful of defecting Democrats to support the bill to override a promised veto from Obama. A number of Democrats have indicated concerns, raising the prospect of the first veto override of Obama’s presidency.

Obama, in a weekend interview, suggested he might be open to another way for Congress to register its views on the deal without encroaching on his prerogative to conduct foreign policy. That led to speculation that Obama might support proposals for Congress to take a nonbinding resolution. But Earnest said the White House opposes any and all votes by Congress — other than an eventual vote to fully lift the sanctions Congress has slapped on Iran.



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