

Man Sentenced To 35 Years In Mumbai Attack

CHICAGO (AP) — An American drug dealer who had faced life in prison was sentenced instead to 35 years Thursday for helping plan the deadly 2008 attacks on Mumbai, India — a punishment prosecutors said reflected his broad cooperation with U.S. investigators but that a victim's family member called “an appalling dishonor.”

It was David Coleman Headley's meticulous scouting missions that facilitated the assault by 10 gunmen from a Pakistani-based militant group on multiple targets in Mumbai, including the landmark Taj Mahal Hotel. TV cameras captured much of the three-day rampage often called India's 9/11. More than 160 people, including children, were killed.

Glimpses of the horror came through the teary testimony of one of the victims who described the gory scene as she huddled under a restaurant table with her friends as gunmen sprayed the room with bullets, then walked around executing men, women and children one by one. Her own clothes soaked with blood.

“I know what a bullet can do to every part of the human body,” said Linda Ragsdale, a Tennessee children's author, who was shot. “I know the sound of life leaving a 13-year-old child. These are things I never needed to know, never needed to experience.”

Headley faced life in prison, and at 52 years old, even a 35-year term could mean he'll never walk free. But federal prosecutors had asked for a more lenient 30 to 35 years, citing his extraordinary cooperation including as the government's star witness at the 2011 trial of a Chicago businessman convicted in a failed attack on a Danish newspaper.

Abbas Wants To Meet Israeli Centrists

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — The Palestinian president wants to meet with newly elected Israeli parliament members to lay out his views on peace, hoping a political surge of centrists will provide an opening to resume long-stalled negotiations on a Palestinian state, a senior aide said Thursday.

President Mahmoud Abbas' main target appears to be Yair Lapid, leader of the moderate Yesh Atid (There is a Future) party, who is expected to be influential in setting the priorities of the next government.

Lapid has said he wants Israel to make a serious push for peace, though it is unclear how far he will press the issue in coalition negotiations with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In recent public appearances, he has barely breached the issue, focusing instead on domestic economic concerns.

In elections this week, Lapid's party emerged as the second largest with 19 of 120 seats in parliament, after Netanyahu's right-wing Likud-Yisrael Beiteinu bloc that won 31 seats. Netanyahu will keep his job, but will have to bring other parties into his government to win a parliamentary majority, and Lapid's faction is seen as key to any stable coalition.

Netanyahu and Lapid met Thursday, two days after the election, though formal coalition negotiations will only start next week, and could take up to six weeks.

Countries Warn Citizens Of Threat In Benghazi

LONDON (AP) — Britain, Germany and the Netherlands urged their citizens to immediately leave the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi on Thursday in response to what they called an imminent threat against Westerners.

European officials told The Associated Press that schools were among the potential targets.

The warnings came a day after U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton testified to Congress about the Sept. 11 attack on the U.S. diplomatic mission in Benghazi that killed four Americans, including the U.S. ambassador to Libya.

The warnings also came as French troops battled al-Qaida-linked militants in the West African nation of Mali, and followed the deaths of dozens of foreigners taken hostage by Islamist extremists in Algeria.

It remained, however, unclear if those two events were linked to the latest concerns about Libya.

The foreign ministries of the three European countries issued statements describing the threat as specific and imminent but none would elaborate.

‘Obamacare’ Could Hit Smokers Hard

WASHINGTON (AP) — Millions of smokers could be priced out of health insurance because of tobacco penalties in President Barack Obama's health care law, according to experts who are just now teasing out the potential impact of a little-noted provision in the massive legislation.

The Affordable Care Act — “Obamacare” to its detractors — allows health insurers to charge smokers buying individual policies up to 50 percent higher premiums starting next Jan. 1.

For a 55-year-old smoker, the penalty could reach nearly \$4,250 a year. A 60-year-old could wind up paying nearly \$5,100 on top of premiums.

Younger smokers could be charged lower penalties under rules proposed last fall by the Obama administration. But older smokers could face a heavy hit on their household budgets at a time in life when smoking-related illnesses tend to emerge.

Workers covered on the job would be able to avoid tobacco penalties by joining smoking cessation programs, because employer plans operate under different rules. But experts say that option is not guaranteed to smokers trying to purchase coverage individually.

Mary Jo White Nominated To Lead SEC

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama on Thursday nominated Mary Jo White, a former U.S. attorney who built a reputation prosecuting white-collar criminals, terrorists and mobsters, to lead the Securities and Exchange Commission. The agency has a lead role in implementing changes on Wall Street.

Obama also named Richard Cordray to stay on as head of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. The president used a recess appointment last year to bypass congressional opposition and install the former Ohio attorney general as head of the bureau. That appointment expires at the end of this year.

White spent nearly a decade as the U.S. attorney in Manhattan, handling an array of white-collar crimes and complex securities and financial fraud cases.

She brought down mobster John Gotti and won convictions in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and the 1998 bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa.

Obama said that experience makes White well-suited to implement legislation he championed to change the behavior on Wall Street.

“I’d say that’s a pretty good run. You don’t want to mess with Mary Jo,” Obama said at the White House. “As one former SEC chairman said, Mary Jo does not intimidate easily, and that’s important because she has a big job ahead of her.”

Limits Lifted For Women In Combat

BY LOLITA C. BALDOR

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Women in the military must have the same opportunities as men to take on grueling and dangerous combat jobs, whether loading 50-pound artillery shells or joining commando raids to take out terrorists, defense leaders declared Thursday as they ordered a quarter-million positions open to service members regardless of gender.

As Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, signed an order wiping away generations of limits on women fighting for their country, the military services said they would begin a sweeping review of the physical requirements. At the same time they acknowledged that women have been fighting and dying in Iraq and Afghanistan for more than a decade.

Women make up about 14 percent of the 1.4 million active U.S. military personnel. More than 280,000 women have been sent to Iraq, Afghanistan or neighboring nations in support of the wars. Of the more than 6,600 U.S. service members who have been killed, 152 have been women.

The leaders said no physical standards will be lowered just to send more women closer to the battlefield.

“I fundamentally believe that our military

“Not everyone is going to be able to be a combat soldier. But everyone is entitled to a chance.”

LEON PANETTA

is more effective when success is based solely on ability and qualifications and on performance,” Panetta said at a Pentagon news conference.

“Not everyone is going to be able to be a combat soldier. But everyone is entitled to a chance.”

It won't happen quickly or easily. But in the end, he said, the U.S. military and America will be stronger for it.

Dempsey did not rule out women serving even as members of elite special operations forces, including the Army's Delta Force and the Navy's SEALs, whose members killed 9/11 mastermind Osama bin Laden.

Dempsey said that because of the particularly punishing physical standards and training required for those teams, it might be years before they include women.

But he added: “I think we all believe that there will be women who can meet those standards.”

Recent surveys and experiences suggest the transition may not always be easy. When

the Marine Corps sought women to go through its tough infantry course last year, two volunteered, and both failed to complete the course. And there may not be a wide clamoring from women for the more intense, dangerous and difficult jobs, including some infantry and commando positions.

Representatives of the military services said they will look at each job and military specialty that is currently closed to women and examine the requirements that troops must meet. In some cases — because of equipment upgrades, new technology and automation — the requirements may change, but in no case will they lower the standards in order to allow women to qualify.

As an example, a loader on a tank crew must be able to lift a 50-pound, two-foot-long artillery shell, spin 180 degrees and load it into a tank's cannon. Because of space constraints in the tank, it requires a great deal of upper body strength to hoist the shell.

Troops asked about the change said they just want comrades who can do the job.

“This gives us more people to work with,” said Sgt. Jeremy Grayson, assigned to field infantry at Fort Bliss, Texas. “But they would have to be able to do the physical stuff that men do. Like in some jobs in infantry you're out there for a long time, or in artillery there is heavy work. And they have to be able to pull their own weight.”

Sen. Kerry Tackles Questions On Iran, Syria

BY DONNA CASSATA

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Sen. John Kerry, President Barack Obama's nominee for secretary of state, collected pledges of support Thursday and testified at his confirmation hearing that U.S. foreign policy should be defined by a helping hand as well as military strength.

The Massachusetts Democrat discussed Iran, Syria, climate change and a variety of issues with members of the Foreign Relations Committee at a hearing that recalled an unusual American life — son of a diplomat, enlisted Navy man in Vietnam, anti-war protester, five-term senator and Obama's unofficial envoy.

The nearly four-hour hearing also provided an odd juxtaposition as Kerry, a member of the panel for 28 years and its chairman for the last four, sat alone in the witness chair. At one point, Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., the incoming chairman who presided, mistakenly referred to Kerry as “Mr. Secretary.”

The current secretary, Hillary Rodham Clinton, introduced Kerry, calling him “the right choice.” She is stepping down after four years.

The committee is expected to approve Kerry's nomination early next week, and a full Senate vote could occur before the month is out.

“American foreign policy is not defined by drones and deployments alone,” Kerry said in outlining his views. “We cannot allow the extraordinary good we do to save and change lives to be eclipsed entirely by the role we have had to play since Sept. 11, a role that was thrust upon us.”

Kerry spoke out strongly for dealing with climate change, providing food and energy security and humanitarian assistance. He also spoke of robust foreign aid, but he insisted that the



OLIVIER DOULIERY/ABACA PRESS/MCT

Senator John Kerry testifies before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Thursday, January 24, 2013, in Washington, D.C., for his nomination to be secretary of state.

country must get its fiscal house in order to lead in the world.

“More than ever, foreign policy is economic policy,” said Kerry, who described himself as a “recovering member of the supercommittee.” That bipartisan panel failed in 2011 in its mandate to come up with a deficit-cutting plan.

Faced with Iran's nuclear program, Kerry said the United States will do what it must to prevent Tehran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, but he also signaled that diplomacy re-

mains a viable option.

“I repeat here today: Our policy is not containment. It is prevention, and the clock is ticking on our efforts to secure responsible compliance,” Kerry said.

The senator said he was hopeful that the U.S. and other nations could make progress on the diplomatic front, but that Tehran needs to relent and agree to intrusive inspections.

“If their program is peaceful, they can prove it,” he said.

Despite Uphill Battle, Dems Push Assault Weapons Ban

BY ERICA WERNER

AND NEDRA PICKLER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congressional Democrats unveiled legislation Thursday to ban assault weapons and high-capacity magazines like those used in the school massacre at Newtown, Conn., even as they acknowledged an uphill battle getting the measures through a divided Congress.

The group led by Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., called on the public to get behind their effort, saying that is the only way they will prevail over opposition from the well-organized National Rifle Association and its congressional allies.

“This is really an uphill road. If anyone asked today, ‘Can you win this?’ the answer is, ‘We don’t know, it’s so uphill,’” Feinstein said at a Capitol Hill news conference backed by police chiefs, mayors and crime victims. “There is one great hope out there. And that is you, because you are stronger than the gun lobby. You are stronger than the gun manufacturers. But only if you stand up.”

Feinstein's legislation comes a week after President Barack Obama unveiled a package of gun control measures including a ban on assault weapons and high-ca-

capacity magazines, and it marks the start of tense congressional debate with no certain conclusion.

In addition to NRA opposition, Feinstein and her supporters must contend with the Republican-controlled House, where leaders have shown scant interest in gun measures. Perhaps even more daunting, fellow Democrats from rural states where voters strongly support gun rights have deep concerns about her measure.

Even Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., has expressed skepticism the assault weapons ban could get through Congress. Some advocacy groups are focusing their attention instead on expanding background checks, which is seen as more doable politically.

Feinstein's legislation is written comprehensively to cover rifles, pistols and handguns with one of


any military-style features like detachable stock, pistol grips or grenade launchers. It also bans 157 specific firearms, while excluding 2,258 hunting and sporting rifles and shotguns. And it bans magazines that accept more than 10 rounds.

Feinstein aimed to improve upon the previous assault weapons ban she authored, which expired in 2004 when Congress failed to renew it under NRA pressure. Original passage of that bill in 1994 was blamed for costing Democrats control of the House and Senate after they supported it. There's also considerable debate about its effectiveness during the years it was in effect, in part because of loopholes that allowed gun manufacturers to work around it. Feinstein's new version is more comprehensive in defining what kinds of weapons are banned.

The NRA responded that the new bill would infringe on the constitutional right to bear arms and that instead the focus should be on prosecuting criminals and improving the country's mental health system. “The American people know gun bans do not work, and we are confident Congress will reject Sen. Feinstein's wrong-headed approach,” the NRA said in a statement.

Feinstein said those Democrats with concerns about the legislation needed to ask themselves what their silence would mean.

“Sandy Hook is more eloquent testimony than any of us could possibly give,” she said. “If members of this body are so insensitive to what happened to those small bodies from that Bushmaster when it all becomes known, America is hopeless.”



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Dr. Daniel Johnson will now see patients in Creighton

Dr. Daniel Johnson, an orthopedic surgeon with Orthopedic Institute in Yankton, will now see patients in Creighton at Avera Creighton Hospital. Dr. Johnson received his medical degree from the University of South Dakota School of Medicine. He completed his orthopedic residency at the McLaren General Hospital in Flint, MI. Dr. Johnson specializes in general orthopedics, especially sports injuries, fractures, total knee replacements and upper extremity problems.

Orthopedic Institute has gained a reputation as the region's most trusted name in comprehensive orthopedic care. We're happy to regularly serve the Creighton area.

Dr. Johnson will see patients at Avera Creighton Hospital beginning January 24, and then will see patients the second Thursday of the month. To make an appointment, please call **605-665-0077** or toll free **1-888-331-5890**.



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