

South Sudan Becomes World's Newest Nation

JUBA, South Sudan (AP) — South Sudan became the world's newest nation early Saturday, officially breaking away from Sudan after two civil wars over five decades that cost the lives of millions.

In the new country's capital, Juba, streets pulsed with excitement. Residents danced, banged on jerry cans and chanted the name of the world's newest president, Salva Kiir. One man knelt and kissed the ground as a group ran through the streets singing "We will never, never, never surrender."

"Ah, I'm free," said Daniel Deng, a 27-year-old police officer and former soldier who broke out in a wide grin.

The Republic of South Sudan earned independence at 12:01 a.m. Saturday, breaking Africa's largest country in two. It marked the culmination of a January independence vote, which was guaranteed in a 2005 peace deal that ended the most recent north-south war.

After the celebrations die down, residents of South Sudan face an uphill climb. While the new country is oil-rich, it is one of the poorest and least-developed places on Earth. Unresolved problems between the south and its former foe to the north could mean new conflict along the new international border, advocates and diplomats warn.

Employment Report Shadows Debt Talks

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama used a bleak jobs report Friday to prod Congress toward a swift agreement on deficits and the national debt. But the higher unemployment numbers hardened partisan views that a weak economy can't tolerate added taxes or cuts in spending, both key to the grand deal Obama seeks.

White House, congressional negotiators and their aides worked to bridge differences over how to reduce long term deficits by as much as \$4 trillion over 10 years. Obama plans to call the eight top leaders of Congress to the White House on Sunday to assess progress.

Summing up the difficulties facing them, House Speaker John Boehner likened the task to a notoriously confounding puzzle. "This is a Rubik's Cube that we haven't quite worked out yet," he said.

A budget agreement is central to increasing the nation's borrowing limit, currently capped at \$14.3 trillion, by Aug. 2 to avoid a potentially catastrophic government default. That looming deadline and a new unemployment rate of 9.2 percent heightened the pressure for a deal, uniting the two most high profile challenges now facing Obama's presidency.

Obama called on Congress to move quickly to raise the debt ceiling. He said uncertainty over a potential default has hindered hiring in the private sector.

House Passes \$17B Boost In Military Budget

WASHINGTON (AP) — Money for the Pentagon and the nation's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is proving largely immune from the budget-cutting that's slamming other government agencies in the rush to bring down the deficit.

On a 336-87 vote Friday, the Republican-controlled House overwhelmingly backed a \$649 billion defense spending bill that boosts the Defense Department budget by \$17 billion. The strong bipartisan embrace of the measure came as White House and congressional negotiators face an Aug. 2 deadline on agreeing to trillions of dollars in federal spending cuts and raising the borrowing limit so the U.S. does not default on debt payments.

While House Republican leaders agreed to slash billions from the proposed budgets for other agencies, hitting food aid for low-income women, health research, energy efficiency and much more, the military budget is the only one that would see a double-digit increase in its account beginning Oct. 1.

Concerns about undermining national security, cutting military dollars at a time of war and losing defense jobs back home trumped fiscal discipline in the House. Only 12 Republicans and 75 Democrats opposed the overall bill.

"In the midst of a serious discussion about our nation's debt crisis, House Republicans demonstrated responsible leadership that sets priorities and does not jeopardize our national security interests and our nation's ongoing military efforts," Rep. Tom Price, R-Ga., chairman of the House Republican Policy Committee, said in a statement.

ECONOMY

Weak Hiring Hinders Outlook

BY CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — Hiring slowed to a near-standstill last month, raising doubts that the economy will rebound in the second half of the year.

The report baffled economists who had predicted much stronger job creation. And it escalated a debate in Washington over how to spur hiring and energize the economy while also cutting federal spending.

Just 18,000 net jobs were created in June, the fewest in nine months. The unemployment rate rose to 9.2 percent, the highest rate of the year, the Labor Department said Friday.

Stocks plunged after the report was released, although the market recovered some losses in late-afternoon trading. The Dow Jones industrial average closed down 62 points for the day. Broader indexes also fell.

For President Barack Obama, the sputtering job market represents a threat 16 months before his re-election bid.

"Our economy as a whole just isn't producing

nearly enough jobs for everybody who is looking," Obama acknowledged in a speech in the White House Rose Garden.

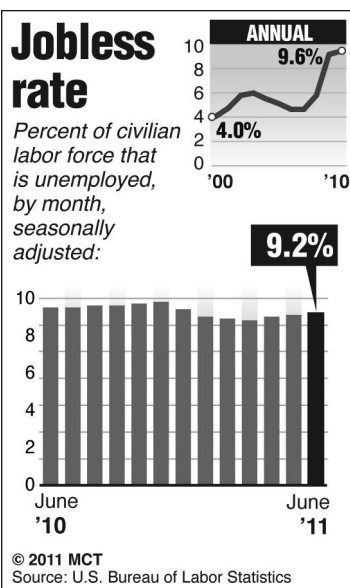
Obama used the dismal job data to press Congress to raise the government's borrowing limit. He also said Congress could strengthen the economy by passing three free-trade accords, approving government projects to create construction jobs and extending a Social Security tax cut.

But Republicans oppose an increase in the \$14.3 trillion borrowing limit without steep cuts in spending. And they said the report reinforces their argument that tax increases would stunt job growth and shouldn't be part of any deal.

Friday's report suggested that a slowdown that struck the economy in the spring and curtailed job creation may be more than brief.

"June's employment report doesn't have a single redeeming feature," said Paul Ashworth, an economist at Capital Economics. "It's awful from start to finish."

Two years after the recession officially ended, companies are adding fewer workers despite record cash stockpiles and healthy profit margins.



Shuttle Lights Its Fire For The Last Time

BY MARCIA DUNN
AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Atlantis and four astronauts thundered into orbit Friday on NASA's last space shuttle voyage, writing the final chapter in a 30-year story of dazzling triumphs, shattering tragedy and, ultimately, unfulfilled expectations.

After days of gloomy forecasts full of rain and heavy cloud cover, the spaceship lifted off at 11:29 a.m. — just 2 1/2 minutes late — and embarked on the 135th shuttle mission. The crowd of spectators was estimated at nearly 1 million.

"Let's light this fire one more time," Commander Christopher Ferguson said just before taking flight.

The shuttle was visible for 42 seconds before disappearing into the clouds.

It will be at least three years — possibly five or more — before astronauts are launched again from U.S. soil, and so this final journey of the shuttle era packed in crowds and roused emotions on a scale not seen since the Apollo moon shots. NASA has set of long-term goal of flying to an asteroid and eventually Mars.

"Take a deep breath. Enjoy a little time here with your families again. But we've got a lot of work to do. We've got another program that we've got to get under way," NASA Administrator Charles Bolden told the launch



Margaret Murphy, center, cheers as she watches space shuttle Atlantis lift off from Kennedy Space Center, Florida with other spectators at the Banana Creek viewing site Friday in Cape Canaveral, Fla.

control team after Atlantis reached orbit. He added: "We know what we're doing. We know how to get there. We've just got to convince everybody else that we know what we're doing."

Atlantis' crew will deliver a year's worth of critical supplies to the International Space Station

and return with as much trash as possible. The spaceship is scheduled to come home on July 20 after 12 days in orbit.

The four experienced space fliers rode Atlantis from the same launch pad used more than a generation ago by the Apollo astronauts. NASA waived its own

weather rules in the final minutes of the countdown to allow the launch to go forward. In the end, though, the liftoff was delayed not by the weather but by the need to verify that the launch pad support equipment was retracted all the way.

The last-minute suspense was fitting in a way, since Florida's famously stormy weather delayed numerous shuttle missions almost from the start of the program and was a major reason spaceflight never became routine, as NASA had hoped for.

Spectators jammed Cape Canaveral and surrounding towns for the emotional farewell. Kennedy Space Center itself was packed with shuttle workers, astronauts and 45,000 invited guests.

NASA's original shuttle pilot, Robert Crippen, now 73, was among the VIPs. He flew Columbia, along with Apollo 16 moon-walker John Young, on the inaugural test flight in 1981. Other notables on the guest list: a dozen members of Congress, Cabinet members, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, four Kennedy family members, singers Jimmy Buffett and Gloria Estefan, and two former NASA chiefs.

"I'm a little bit sad about it, and a little bit wistful," said Jennifer Cardwell, 38, who came with her husband, John, and two young sons from Fairhope, Ala. "I've grown up with it."

OBITUARIES

Virgil Grace

SIoux FALLS — Virgil Grace, age 92 of Sioux Falls, passed away on July 7, 2011, 5 days after his 92nd birthday.

His funeral service will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, July 11th at Wesley United Methodist Church.

Visitation with the family present will be on Sunday July 10th from 3-5 p.m. at Miller Funeral Home (507 S. Main).

Virgil was born on July 2nd, 1919. He married Ethel "Vickie" Jorgensen on 12/02/42 and they were married for 60 years. They had 2 children, Judy (Bob Schaap) and Jerry both of Sioux Falls; a daughter-in-law of nearly 40 years and recent care giver, Gail Grace; three grandchildren: Brian and Amy both of SF and Wade (Minneapolis); 4 great-grandchildren: Taylor, Sidney, Camryn and Casey Bonestroo all of SF. He was employed at Morris for 37 years.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
July 9, 2011



Grace

Duane Heene

Duane J. Heene, 63, of Yankton died Friday, July 8, 2011, at Avera Sister James Care Center, Yankton.

Memorial Services are at 11 a.m. Wednesday at the Yankton High School Theater, Yankton, with the Rev. Ron Johnson and Bob Cappel officiating, with lunch to follow at the First United Methodist Church, Yankton.

Visitations are 5-8 p.m. Tuesday at Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home and Crematory, Yankton.

Judson Rowland

WYNOT, Neb. — Judson J. Rowland, 24 of Wynot, Neb., and formerly of Thurston, Neb., died Friday, July 8, 2011 at his residence of an apparent suicide. Parents are Devin and Robin Rowland of Wynot.

Funeral Services are pending at Wintz Funeral Home, Hartington.

Veva Hoffman

VIBORG — Veva Hoffman, 75, died on July 6, 2011, at Pioneer Memorial Nursing Home, Viborg. Services are at 9:30 a.m. Mon-

Richard Merrigan

Richard Merrigan, age 86, of Yankton, passed away Thursday, July 7, 2011 at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital, Yankton, SD after a long illness.

Funeral services will be 2:00 p.m. Monday, July 11, 2011 at the Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Chapel, Yankton, with Rev. Paul Opsahl officiating. Burial will be in the Mission Hill Cemetery, Mission Hill, SD at approximately 3:45 p.m. Monday afternoon.

Visitations will be from 6 to 8 p.m. Sunday evening at the Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home & Crematory, Yankton, and then one hour prior to the service.

Pallbearers are John Shelburg, Rick Merrigan, Curt

day at First Baptist Church, Viborg.

Visitation is 1-8 p.m. Sunday, with family present from 7-8 p.m., at the Viborg Funeral.

Burial is in Woodlawn Cemetery in Sioux Falls at 2:30 p.m. Monday.

Register online at www.viborg-funeralhome.com.



Merrigan

Bernard, Jack Meyers, Gary Slowey, and Mik Kafka.

Richard was born July 5th 1925 to Hannah (Hoensing) and William Merrigan in Menominee, NE. He went to

school at the old Catholic School and later married Barbara Shelburg. He worked the early part of his life for John Gregg at Couch Motors, later started his own business, Merrigan's Used Cars and Salvage. He was the constant deal maker in life, always working hard and looking for new opportunities. Later he and his wife bought

older homes and renovated them while still running the primary business.

He helped numerous people in life with free rent, money, food, car parts, and cars. He knew what it was like to be in need. His smile and quick wit earned him the nickname Shady; you never knew what he was going to say. Often you would hear him telling stories of the gas rationing, bootlegging and old glory days of Yankton.

He taught his children strong work ethics, never be afraid of hard work or thinking outside the box.

He is survived by one sister Joan (Glenn) Stuen, Forest Lake, MN. His surviving children are Rick (Lisa) Merrigan, Sandy Mer-

rigan, and MelCena (Curtis) Bernard, all of Yankton, SD; grandchildren, Heather, Sherry and Kylie Merrigan; 3 great grandchildren; 3 brothers-in-law, Charlie, James and John Shelburg; 3 sisters in law, Kathy, Donna and Marlene Shelburg, and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Barbara, sister, Hyacinth Freeman, father and mother.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
July 9, 2011



Online condolences at:
www.opsahl-kostelfuneralhome.com

Esther 'Babe' Ehrke

VIBORG — Esther "Babe" Ehrke, 82, died July 7, 2011, at Pioneer Memorial Hospital, Viborg.

A memorial service is at 11 a.m. Tuesday at the Viborg Funeral Home.

Register online at www.viborg-funeralhome.com.

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