

Egypt's Mubarak's Health Rapidly Declining

CAIRO (AP) — Hosni Mubarak is slipping in and out of consciousness eight days after the ousted Egyptian leader was sent to prison to begin serving a life sentence, a security official said on Sunday.
With rumors of the former president's death spreading rapidly, authorities granted his wife, former first lady Suzanne Mubarak, and the couple's two daughters-in-law special permission to visit him in Cairo's Torah prison early that morning.
"The former president's health is in decline, but now it's stable in its deteriorated state," the official said. Since his wife's visit, Mubarak has suffered from an irregular heartbeat and required assistance in breathing.
The official told The Associated Press that the former president now lives only on liquids and yogurt. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.
Mubarak's health is reported to have collapsed since his June 2 conviction for failing to stop the killing of protesters during the uprising that overthrew him in 2011. His life sentence saw him transferred immediately to a prison hospital, instead of the military hospital and other facilities where he had been held since his April 2011 arrest.

Dollar Denies Choking, Punching Daughter

COLLEGE PARK, Ga. (AP) — Megachurch pastor Creflo Dollar staunchly denied Sunday that he punched and choked his 15-year-old daughter in an argument, telling his congregation the allegations made in a police report are nothing but "exaggeration and sensationalism."
"I will say this emphatically: I should have never been arrested," Dollar said in his first public appearance two days after police charged him with misdemeanor counts of simple battery and cruelty to children.
The pastor got an enthusiastic ovation from the packed church as he took the pulpit Sunday at the World Changers Church International in metro Atlanta. He addressed the criminal charges head-on for several minutes before moving on to his sermon.
"I want you all to hear personally from me that all is well in the Dollar household," Dollar said.
The 50-year-old Dollar is one of the most prominent African-American preachers based around Atlanta, with 30,000 members in the Atlanta area and a ministry of satellite churches across the U.S.

Push To Relax Marijuana Laws Moves Forward

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — Catharine Leach is married and has two boys, age 2 and 8. She has a good job with a federal contractor and smokes pot most every day.
While she worries that her public support for marijuana decriminalization and legalization could cost her a job or bring the police to her door, the 30-year-old Warwick resident said she was tired of feeling like a criminal for using a drug that she said is far less harmful than the glass or wine or can of beer enjoyed by so many others after a long day's work. Like others around the nation working to relax penalties for possession of pot, she decided to stop hiding and speak out.
"I'm done being afraid," she said. "People in this country are finally coming around and seeing that putting someone in jail for this doesn't make sense. It's just a changing of the time."
Once consigned to the political fringe, marijuana policy is appearing on legislative agendas around the country thanks to an energized base of supporters and an increasingly open-minded public. Lawmakers from Rhode Island to Colorado are mulling medical marijuana programs, pot dispensaries, decriminalization and even legalization. Seventeen states and the District of Columbia now authorize medical marijuana and 14, including neighboring Connecticut and Massachusetts, have rolled back criminal penalties for possession of small amounts of pot.
Rhode Island is poised to become the 15th state to decriminalize marijuana possession.

Hundreds Evacuated As Colo., N.M. Fires Grow

LAPORTE, Colo. (AP) — Strong winds have grounded firefighting aircraft at a 40-square-mile wildfire in southern New Mexico.
Winds have been blowing up to 35 mph at the blaze near the mountain community of Ruidoso on Sunday. Crews were still working to build a fire line around the fire, which has damaged or destroyed 36 structures.
Crews also were fighting a 22-square-mile wildfire burning erratically in Colorado, about 15 miles west of Fort Collins. Eighteen structures have been burned.
The blazes have forced hundreds of people from their homes and the evacuation of wolves from a sanctuary.

Annie Oakley's Gun Fetches \$143,400

McALLEN, Texas (AP) — A shotgun that once belonged to Western sharpshooter and entertainer Annie Oakley has sold for more than \$143,000 at an auction in Dallas.
Heritage Auctions says the trove of about 100 of the legend's items headlining its "Legends of the Wild West" event Sunday brought in nearly \$520,000.
The items included several guns, Oakley's Stetson hat, photographs and letters. They were put up for auction by Oakley's great-grandnieces, who inherited them from their mother who died in 2009.
Oakley's Parker Brothers 12-gauge shotgun garnered the highest price at \$143,400.
Oakley became famous in the 1880s and 1890s as a sharpshooter in Buffalo Bill's Wild West show. She died in 1926 at the age of 66.

Shooting

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said. He said Pitts was shot and killed, while two others also were hit by gunfire. Vines said he had never met the men he was arguing with.
"It's like I lost a lung," Vines said of losing his friend. "I don't know how I'm going to survive this."
Several emergency vehicles converged overnight around the University Heights apartment complex where many students live. The building was swathed in

yellow police tape.
It appeared that the shooting happened in an archway near the apartment complex information center, near the edge of the parking lot. Five uniformed officers guarded the area, which was sealed off with crime scene tape, and a handful of crime scene investigators were at work.
Mack, the wounded player, is a junior offensive lineman from St. Matthews, S.C. He played in five games last season. Coach Gene Chizik said Mack was expected to make a full recovery.
Christian is an offensive lineman who was out last season while dealing with a back injury. Phillips was a backup fullback.

France

Leftists Ahead In Parliamentary Vote

BY ELAINE GANLEY
Associated Press



Hollande

President Francois Hollande's Socialist Party, bolstered by leftist allies, stands positioned to take control of the lower house of parliament so he can revamp a country his partisans see as too capitalist for the French, and push to save the eurozone through growth, not austerity.
The conservative party of former President Nicolas Sarkozy, which has controlled the 577-seat National Assembly since 2002, will likely lose its grip on power in the final round of voting in a week. Sarkozy was defeated in the May 6 final round of the presidential race.
Hollande will likely not get his wish for a pure Socialist Party sweep of the seats of power in France, but he need not fret.
Polling agency projections after Sunday's first round of voting in legislative elections show the Socialists slightly behind Sarkozy's UMP party. But other leftist parties expected to support Hollande — including the communist-inspired Leftist Front and the main environmental party — did well Sunday.
A leftist victory in the voting, five weeks after Hollande took office, would brutally jar the French political landscape.
Leftists are forecast to take between 300 and 366 seats in the next parliament, and the conservatives between 210 and 270 seats, according to the CSA and TNS-Sofres polling agencies.
That would be a sharp shift from the current parliament, where the conservative UMP and its allies had 346 seats and leftists 226 seats.
Sarkozy's party, the Union for a Popular Movement, or UMP, is trying to save its honor. Leading UMP figures vowed not to make alliances between rounds with the extreme-right National Front, which moved into position to grab its first small presence in parliament in more than 25 years.
Eyes are on the National Front at voting time both because of the stigma of racism and anti-Semitism which clings to the party and because of its potential for cutting into the win margin of the mainstream right.
Socialists or other leftists were leading in 70 of 116 districts where the vote count was complete Sunday evening, according to official

results. The Interior Ministry is releasing results gradually through the night, district by district.
Socialists and other leftists won between 31 percent and 35 percent of the nationwide vote Sunday, while UMP candidates and their allies won between 34 percent and 35 percent, according to estimates by polling agencies CSA, TNS-Sofres, Ipsos and Ifop. The projections, based on actual vote results in select polling stations nationwide, were largely in line with expectations.
Turnout was relatively low, estimated at 57 percent, well below the 63 percent in the last parliamentary elections five years ago.
The newly revamped National Front party failed to fully capitalize on the solid third-place showing of its leader, Marine Le Pen, in the presidential race. The National Front wants to pull France out of the euro currency, secure French borders and stop immigration by Muslims whom it claims are bent on the "Islamization" of France.
It could still decide races in a number of districts by throwing support to the UMP candidate — or withholding it. And the far right can nourish hopes of winning in up to three districts, according to polling agencies.
Le Pen, with a score of more than 42 percent in the depressed former coal-mining basin around the northern town of Henin-Beaumont, is among those with a chance of winning next week. She knocked out her bitter far-left rival Jean-Luc Melenchon from the race and will face a Socialist candidate in next Sunday's vote.
Hollande's Socialists appealed for support in next week's final race. Should they lose in a surprise comeback by the right, Hollande would be forced to appoint a conservative prime minister and carry on in what the French refer to as "cohabitation," in which life can be as tense as within a bickering couple unable to repair their relationship or to divorce.
A Socialist win would give the left control of both houses of parliament and the regions.
Socialist Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault called on voters to give the government a "large, solid and coherent majority" in the

second round so "the change you voted for May 6 can be put in motion."
"If that is not the case, then the fair recovery of the country, with justice for all, cannot take place," Ayrault said.
Hollande promised to rectify what he said was years of injustice under Sarkozy, from making the rich pay higher taxes to creating 60,000 posts in the educational system trimmed by the previous government.
He also promised to ensure that the European Union's budget-cutting pact to ward off instability is reworked to emphasize growth, not austerity.
The French vote will have an impact on Hollande's bid to inject the growth-promoting measures, because he needs the political legitimacy that a strong majority would confer to carry weight in his dealings with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, opposed to such changes.
And he needs French parliamentary backing to approve bailouts or EU-wide treaties.
Conservatives warned that the Socialists' spending plans could cripple France just as it and other European countries are being asked to rescue Spain.
Sarkozy's campaign spokeswoman and a conservative parliamentary candidate, Nathalie Kosciusko-Morizet, claimed that Hollande's team is already spending so much that it is taking France towards "bankruptcy, a Spain-like, Greek-like situation."
France's decisive second round election falls June 17, the same day that Greeks are voting in new elections that determine whether Greece sticks with the heavy budget cutting that is required under the terms of an international bailout.
The French right maintained hope for a turnaround in the final vote. "We're not giving up," conservative former Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said on TF1 television.
Le Pen denounced the voting system as "profoundly undemocratic" because it has deprived her party of representation in parliament despite relatively large voter support. The National Front put 35 lawmakers in the lower house under a proportional voting system put in place from 1986-1988 by then-President Francois Mitterrand. Hollande has promised to institute a measure of proportional voting.

Rescue Loans For Spain's Banks Buys Europe Time

BY PAUL WISEMAN AND PETER SVENSSON
AP Business Writers

WASHINGTON — A \$125 billion plan to rescue Spain's banks won't solve Europe's debt crisis or ease the pain of double-digit unemployment across the continent.
But it is likely to calm financial markets and buy time for European policymakers to work with other weak economies threatening the stability of the 17 countries that use the euro.
Europe still has plenty of troubles to address in the three other countries that have already received financial help: Greece, Portugal and Ireland. In Greece, voters could elect a government next week that will refuse to live up to the terms of the country's \$170 billion rescue package. Portugal is combating a toxic combination of high debt and 15 percent unemployment. Ireland is cleaning up a banking mess a lot like Spain's. Then there's Italy, the eurozone's third-largest economy, where government debt is piling up as the economy stag-nates.
Spain on Saturday asked

finance ministers for the 17 countries that use the euro for money to rescue its banks, which have been crushed under the weight of bad real estate loans. The finance ministers responded by offering up to \$125 billion in loans that the Spanish government could funnel to banks.
The plan eases an immediate crisis in the euro's fourth-largest economy. The deterioration of Spain's banks and the pressing need for a rescue was threatening to bankrupt its government. That would likely cause far more pain for Europe than the financial

messes in Greece, Portugal and Ireland.
"This move brings into sharp relief the enormous amount of money that will be needed to cor-don off the rest of the euro zone periphery in the event of a Greek meltdown," says Eswar Prasad, professor of trade policy at Cornell University.
Investors are worried about what will happen when Greek voters go to the polls June 17.
If Greece reneges on the strict austerity measures that come with its rescue package, it could be forced to abandon the euro.

Greece's departure from the Euro-zone would likely cause financial chaos across Europe: Greek debts would go from being denominated in sturdy euros to being denominated in Greek drachmas of dubious value.
Worse, a Greek exit from the euro would raise fears that another European country such Portugal or Italy might be next.
But analysts said even bolder action may be needed from some key European governments and institutions that have been leery of committing too much to the effort.

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For our upcoming July/August HerVoice Magazine
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Example: Chicken Casserole
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