

NATION/WORLD DIGEST

Holder: Bin Laden Will Never Face U.S. Trial

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General Eric Holder told Congress on Tuesday that Osama bin Laden will never face trial in the United States because he will not be captured alive. In testy exchanges with House Republicans, the attorney general compared terrorists to mass murderer Charles Manson and predicted that events would ensure "we will be reading Miranda rights to the corpse of Osama bin Laden" not to the al-Qaida leader as a captive. Holder sternly rejected criticism from GOP members of a House Appropriations subcommittee, who contend it is too dangerous to put terror suspects on trial in federal civilian courts as Holder has proposed. The attorney general said it infuriates him to hear conservative critics complain that terrorists would get too many rights in the court system. Terrorists in court "have the same rights that Charles Manson would have, any other kind of mass murderer," the attorney general said. "It doesn't mean that they're going to be coddled, it doesn't mean that they're going to be treated with kid gloves."

Clashes Sweep Through East Jerusalem

JERUSALEM (AP) — Hundreds of Palestinians in east Jerusalem set tires and garbage bins ablaze on Tuesday and hurled rocks at Israeli riot police, who responded with rubber bullets and tear gas. The heaviest clashes in months broke out as an American envoy abruptly canceled a visit, deepening a U.S.-Israeli diplomatic feud. The violence spread from Arab neighborhood to Arab neighborhood across the eastern side of the volatile city. Angered by plans for more Jewish housing in predominantly Arab east Jerusalem and unsubstantiated rumors surrounding the rededication of an Old City synagogue, Palestinians clashed with Israeli forces throughout the day. Thousands of police, including anti-riot units armed with assault rifles, stun grenades and batons, were deployed across east Jerusalem in anticipation of the unrest. Palestinian medics said 10 people were seriously wounded, five from rubber bullets. Israeli police said 15 security men suffered light wounds, including one man wounded by gunfire. About 60 protesters were arrested.

Toyota Shifts Eye To Crashed Prius In N.Y.

NEW YORK (AP) — Toyota's investigation of sudden acceleration in some of its cars is shifting to suburban New York, where a driver said her Prius sped up on its own and slammed into a stone wall. Technicians from Toyota will join government investigators in Harrison, N.Y., on Wednesday to inspect the car. Toyota plans to examine an internal data recorder that documents the moments before and after a crash. The company will use equipment to determine how many times the driver hit the brakes and gas. It used the same tools earlier this week to cast doubt on a California driver who claimed his Prius sped to 94 mph before a patrol officer helped him stop it. In the Harrison case, authorities have said there is no indication of driver error. A housekeeper told police the car sped up on its own as she eased forward down her employer's driveway on March 9 and hit a wall across the street. She was not hurt.

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Plane Falls On, Kills Jogger

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. (AP) — A father of two in town on business was jogging on the beach and listening to his iPod when he was hit from behind and killed by a small plane making an emergency landing, officials said Tuesday. Robert Gary Jones, 38, of Woodstock, Ga., died instantly Monday evening when he was hit by the single-engine plane, which had lost its propeller, said Beaufort County Coroner Ed Allen. The pilot's vision was blocked by oil on the windshield. The coroner said Jones apparently did not see or hear the plane, which was "basically gliding." Federal Aviation Administration records show the experimental Lancair IV-P plane that hit Robert Jones was registered to Edward I. Smith of Chesapeake, Va. Smith was on the beach with his plane Tuesday and confirmed he was the pilot. He said he did not want to talk about the crash and offered few details. Authorities said there was also a passenger on board but did not identify him or her. The plane started leaking oil at about 13,000 feet and tried originally to make it to Hilton Head Airport, said fire and rescue spokeswoman Joheida Fister.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Business Groups Begin Campaigns

Undecided House Democrats Targeted By Supporters, Detractors Of Legislation

BY RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — With time and tempers short, everyone's playing hardball in the drive to pass — or stop — President Barack Obama's massive health care legislation by the weekend. Business groups are spending \$1 million a day to depict the bill as a job killer in television ads in the home districts of 26 wavering House Democrats. A new ad barrage from supporters of the legislation went up Tuesday in 11 districts, some overlapping. And unions are threatening some of those lawmakers to come through for Obama — or pay the price in the fall elections. Obama has summoned members to the White House one by one for private, face-to-face persuasion, and also met larger groups. White House aides said he plans at least one more public health care event this week, including remarks in Fairfax, Va., on Friday. Diverse administration resources are being employed: Even the Navy secretary is in the game.

"We here in Congress are giving a new meaning to March madness," Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, an opponent of the legislation, said Tuesday. At stake is a bill that would cover some 30 million uninsured people, end insurance practices such as denying coverage to those with a pre-existing condition, require almost all Americans to get coverage by law and try to slow the cost of medical care nationwide. The comprehensive legislation could affect nearly every American, from those undergoing annual checkups to people facing major surgery. The sought-after Democrats

— mainly moderates, but also a few liberals — are mostly trying to stay out of sight. They include 37 who voted against the bill last year and a smaller number who are having second thoughts after supporting it the first time. Walking briskly, lawmakers duck in and out of the House chamber during votes, avoiding eye contact with reporters. Moderate Rep. Mike McMahon, D-N.Y., is feeling the push and pull. Elected with strong labor support two years ago, he voted against the bill in November, pleasing constituents in his Republican-leaning district on Staten Island who saw it as a government power grab. Last week, McMahon received a visit from Mike Fishman, president of the Service Employees International Union's local 32BJ. The blunt message: If you can't support health care reform, we can't support you. The union is threatening to switch its allegiance if he votes against the bill. "Everyone will be looking very, very closely at this vote," Fishman's spokesman, Matthew Nerzig, said with understatement.

At the White House on Tuesday, Obama met with health care executives, including Sister Carol Keehan, head of the Catholic Health Association. In a break with other abortion opponents, the Catholic hospitals are advocating for the bill. "We think the bill as written now meets the test of no federal

funding for abortion," Keehan said in an interview. She's letting anti-abortion Democrats know her position announced over the weekend. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., is trying to keep wavering lawmakers in line, meeting with them individually and in groups. She has summoned female Democrats to her office for a meeting Wednesday morning. An estimated \$200 million has been spent for political advertising on health care since the beginning of last year, with groups favoring Obama's overhaul holding a slight edge. In the final stretch, however, opponents have gotten the upper hand and supporters are rushing to catch up.

A coalition of business groups led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce went up with ads last week. The group is now spending an estimated \$1 million a day, enough for 25 to 40 television ads, said Evan Tracey, president of Kantar Media-CMAG, which tracks political advertising. The ads frame the health

care bill as a drag on the economy, raising taxes and saddling companies with expensive new mandates. Liberal groups are hoping they won't be too late. Health Care for America Now and several labor unions have announced a \$1.7 million ad buy focusing on the districts of 17 undecided Democrats. Their ads portray the health insurance industry as a profit-hungry predator. "The ads are designed to get people fired up, so that members feel it coming back from their districts," said Tracey. "Members are on notice that they may be voting on this now, but their constituents will be voting on it in November." House Democratic leaders are still short of the 216 votes they need. While broad outlines of the \$1 trillion, 10-year measure are well known, critical final details are still being ironed out. Lawmakers are awaiting a cost report from the Congressional Budget Office on compromises worked out with Obama to reconcile versions passed earlier by the House and Senate.



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