

Afghanistan

U.S. Paid Families For Deaths

BY MIRWAIS KHAN AND HEIDI VOGT
 Associated Press

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — The U.S. paid \$50,000 in compensation for each villager killed and \$11,000 for each person wounded in a shooting rampage allegedly carried out by a rogue American soldier in southern Afghanistan, Afghan officials said Sunday.

The families were told that the money came from President Barack Obama. The unusually large payouts were the latest move by the White House to mend relations with the Afghan people after the killings threatened to shatter already tense relations.

Army Staff Sgt. Robert Bales is accused of sneaking off his base on March 11, then creeping into houses in two nearby villages and opening fire on families as they slept.

The killings came as tensions between the U.S. and Afghanistan were strained following the burning of Qurans at a U.S. base in February. That act — which U.S. officials have acknowledged was a mistake — sparked riots and

attacks that killed more than 30 people, including six American soldiers.

There have been no violent protests following the March 11 shootings in Kandahar province's Panjwai district, but demands for justice on Afghan terms have been getting louder since Bales was flown out of the country to a U.S. military prison. Many Afghans in Kandahar have continued to argue that there must have been multiple gunmen and accused the U.S. government of using Bales as a scapegoat.

U.S. investigators believe the gunman returned to his base after the first attack and later slipped away to kill again.

That would seem to support the U.S. government's assertion that the shooter acted alone, since the killings would have been perpetrated over a longer period of time than assumed when Bales was detained outside his base in Kandahar province's Panjwai district.

But it also raises new questions about how the suspect could have carried out the pre-dawn attacks without drawing attention from any Americans on the base.

Bales has been charged with 17 counts of premeditated murder and other crimes and could face the death penalty if convicted.

The families of the dead received the money Saturday at the governor's office, said Kandahar provincial council member Agha Lalai. He and community elder Jan Agha confirmed the payout amounts.

Survivors previously had received smaller compensation payments from Afghan officials — \$2,000 for each death and \$1,000 for each person wounded.

Two U.S. officials confirmed that compensation had been paid but declined to discuss exact amounts, saying only that the payments reflected the devastating nature of the incident. The officials spoke anonymously because of the sensitivity of the subject.

A spokesman for NATO and U.S. forces, Lt. Col. Jimmie Cummings, said only that coalition members often make compensation payments, but they are usually kept private.

Mexico

Pope Celebrates Mass, Prays For Hope

BY MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN
 AND NICOLE WINFIELD
 Associated Press

SILAO, Mexico — Pope Benedict XVI urged Mexicans to wield their faith against poverty and drug violence, telling hundreds of thousands of worshippers in an open-air Mass on Sunday that they would find hope if they purify their hearts.

Benedict delivered his message in the shadow of the Christ the King monument, one of the most important symbols of Mexican Christianity, which recalls the 1920s Roman Catholic uprising against the anti-clerical laws that forbade public worship services such as the one Benedict celebrated.

The pope flew over the monument in a Mexican military Superpuma helicopter en route to the Mass at Bicentennial Park, where he rode in the popemobile through an enthusiastic crowd estimated at 350,000.

Often seen as austere and reserved, Benedict charmed a country that adored his charismatic predecessor, John Paul II, by donning a broad-brimmed Mexican sombrero as he was driven to the altar at the sun-drenched park.

"Some young people rejected the pope, saying he has an angry face. But now they see him like a beloved grandfather," said Cristian Roberto Cerdá Reynoso, 17, a seminarian from Leon.

Before the ceremony, the vast field was filled with noise, as people took pictures with their cell phones and passed around food.

As the Mass started, all fell silent, some dropping to their knees in the dirt and gazing at the altar or giant video screens.

In his homily, Benedict encour-



MICHAEL ROBINSON CHAVEZ/LOS ANGELES TIMES/MCT

Pope Benedict XVI performed a Sunday mass at the Parque Bicentenario outside Silao, Mexico, Sunday. Tens of thousands turned out to see the mass, his first in Spanish speaking Latin America.

aged Mexicans to purify their hearts to confront the sufferings, difficulties and evils of daily life. It has been a common theme in his first visit to Mexico as pope: On Saturday he urged the young to be messengers of peace in a country that has witnessed the deaths of more than 47,000 people in a drug war that has escalated during a government offensive against cartels.

"At this time when so many families are separated or forced to emigrate, when so many are suffering due to poverty, corruption, domestic violence, drug trafficking, the crisis of values and increased

crime, we come to Mary in search of consolation, strength and hope," Benedict said in a prayer at the end of Mass.

"She is the mother of the true God, who invites us to stay with faith and charity beneath her mantle, so as to overcome in this way all evil and to establish a more just and fraternal society."

The reference to Mary is particularly important for Mexicans, who revere the Virgin of Guadalupe as their patron saint. His reference to immigration resonated in Guanajuato, which is among the Mexican states sending the most migrant workers north.

Many said the pope showed a deep understanding of the challenges Mexico faces. While they said things may not change as a result, at least the pontiff gave them hope.

"It was really gratifying," industrial engineer Juan Jose Ruiz Moreno, 39, said after the Mass. "In his words there was a great understanding of us, the Mexican people."

Some in the crowd wore white tunics with images of Benedict, the monument and Mexico's beloved Virgin of Guadalupe, and reading: "The entire church asks for peace in Mexico."

House GOP Budget Plan Heats Up As Issue

WASHINGTON (AP) — The new debt-slashing budget plan pushed by House Republicans heated up as a presidential campaign issue Sunday as the proposal's architect, Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, sparred with top Democrats over its political fallout and downplayed the possibility he could be tapped as a vice presidential candidate.

Senior White House adviser David Plouffe dismissed the GOP plan Sunday as "a lot of candy, not a lot of vegetables," and charged that it would be "rubber-stamped" as law if leading Republican presidential hopeful Mitt Romney is elected.

"This is really the Romney-Ryan plan," Plouffe said, adding that its mix of across-the-board tax cuts and stiff budget cuts "showers huge tax cuts on millionaires and billionaires paid for by senior and veterans."

Ryan tried to tamp down speculation that he could be tapped for the No. 2 spot on the GOP ticket, although who will be the nominee is far from settled.

"I would have to consider it, but it's not something I'm even thinking about right now because right — I think our job in Congress is pretty important," Ryan said. "And what we believe we owe the country is, if we don't like the direction the president is taking us, which we don't, we owe them a specific sharp contrast and a different path that they can select in November. And doing this in Congress is really important."

Black Churches Call For Justice In Teen's Death

EATONVILLE, Fla. (AP) — African-American community churches around the nation are amplifying the cries for justice in the shooting death of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin.

Martin was shot while wearing a hooded sweatshirt as he walked home on a rainy night in a gated community. The neighborhood watch volunteer who shot him, 28-year-old George Zimmerman, is the son of a white father and Hispanic mother, and the demands to charge him in Martin's slaying have increased.

In religious centers from Florida to Atlanta, New York and Chicago, many preachers and their congregations wore hooded sweatshirts in Martin's memory. But while the call continued to be for the arrest of shooter George Zimmerman, there were also a large call to use the incident to spark a larger movement.

Santorum Says GOP Nomination Hardly Settled

GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP) — Another victory in hand but still badly trailing rival Mitt Romney, Republican presidential hopeful Rick Santorum vowed to continue his campaign despite an increasingly steep climb to the nomination.

Santorum, buoyed by Saturday's win in Louisiana's primary that boosted his spirit but did little to narrow the delegate gap, urged his supporters to stick with him even as much of the GOP establishment has coalesced around Romney's increasingly inevitable coronation. Even in the face of the political headwinds, the former Pennsylvania senator seemed unwilling to acknowledge it would take a dramatic change in momentum to deny Romney his turn as the GOP nominee.

"Even though a lot of folks are saying this race is over, the people in Louisiana said, 'No, it's not.' They still want to see someone who they can trust, someone who's not running an Etch a Sketch campaign, but one who has their principals written on their heart, not on an erasable tablet," Santorum said Sunday on CBS' "Face the Nation." "And I think that's what helped us deliver the win in Louisiana, and I think we're going to do very well up here in Wisconsin, too."

But it's going to be a tough fight, for sure.

Romney remains far ahead with 568 delegates to Santorum's 273, according to an Associated Press tally. Newt Gingrich follows with 135 and Ron Paul has 50.

Health Care Ruling May Have Political Impact

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court's ruling on the constitutionality of President Barack Obama's health care overhaul is likely to shake the presidential election race in early summer. But the winners in the court will not necessarily be the winners in the political arena.

No doubt, a decision to throw out the entire law would be a defeat for Obama. His judgment and leadership, even his reputation as a former constitutional law professor, would be called into question for pushing through a contentious and partisan health insurance overhaul only to see it declared unconstitutional by the court.

But it would not spell certain doom for his re-election. In fact, it would end the GOP argument that a Republican president must be elected to guarantee repeal of the law. It also could re-energize liberals, shift the spotlight onto insurance companies and reignite a debate about how to best provide health care.

If the court upholds the law, Obama would be vindicated legally. Republican constitutional criticisms would be undercut because five of the nine justices were nominated by Republican presidents.

But opposition would intensify in the political world. Without legal recourse, Republicans would gain new energy to argue that the only path to kill the law would be to elect a Republican president and enough GOP candidates to control the House and Senate. They might be wary of promising overnight repeal because a filibuster-proof Senate majority seems beyond their reach in the November election.

'Hunger Games' Devours Box Office With \$155M Opening

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "The Hunger Games" has filled fan appetites with a \$155 million opening weekend that puts it near the top of the domestic record book.

The huge haul marks the third-best debut ever in terms of revenue, behind the \$169.2 million opening for last year's "Harry Potter" finale and the \$158.4 million opening of 2008's "The Dark Knight."

"Harry Potter" and "Batman" were well-established franchises. "The Hunger Games" set a revenue record for a non-sequel.

It also was by far the biggest start for a film opening outside the busy summer and holiday seasons. According to Sunday studio estimates, "The Hunger Games" came in nearly \$40 million ahead of the previous March record-holder,

2010's "Alice in Wonderland" at \$116.1 million.

"The Hunger Games" slid into the No. 3 spot on the domestic revenue chart ahead of "Spider-Man 3," which opened with \$151.1 million in 2007. Factoring in today's higher tickets prices, "The Hunger Games" sold fewer tickets over opening weekend than "Spider-Man 3," though.

With a broader fan base than the "Twilight" franchise, "The Hunger Games" pulled in bigger crowds than the top-grossing installment of that series. "The Twilight Saga: New Moon" leads that franchise with a \$142.8 million opening weekend in 2009.

OBITUARIES

Angela Leise

Angela Leise, age 92, of Yankton, SD died Thursday, March 22, 2012 at the Golden Living Center, Hartington, NE.

Mass of Christian Burial will be 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 27, 2012 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Yankton. Burial will be in the Garden of Memories.

Visitations will be from 6-9 p.m. Monday, March 26, 2012 at the Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home and Crematory, Yankton with a 7:30 p.m. rosary followed by a 7:30 Scripture service. Visitations will resume one hour prior to the service at the church.

Pallbearers will be Jason Roeder, Bryan Schoenfelder, Austin Reinsch, Tiffany Schoenfelder, Tina (Schoenfelder) Jansen, and William Roeder. Honorary pallbearers will be



Leise

Todd Roeder, Marshall Reinsch, and Kevin Reinsch.

Angela Leise was born on June 26, 1919 to John and Maxalinda (Suing) Jansen in Fordyce, NE. She

worked as a sales lady for Rexall Drug. She was united in marriage to Francis V. Leise on October 1, 1941 and to this union four daughters were born: Patricia, Ruth, Cheryl, and Jeri. Angela was known for her great talent for making wedding cakes which she made for each daughter for their weddings. She also made cakes and cookies for all occasions for her grandkids, relatives and many people in the Yankton area. She loved being at

a party with her daughters and was always the last one to leave. She loved to attend her grandchildren's Gazelle games.

She was a long time member of Catholic Daughters of America and Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

Those who will cherish her memory are her four daughters: Patricia (Robert) Schoenfelder of Yankton, SD; Ruth Roeder of Hot Springs Village, AR; Cheryl (Paul) Reinsch of Omaha, NE and Jeri (Jeff) Negri of Santa Rosa, CA; 13 grandchildren; 9 great grandchildren; two brothers, Leonard Jansen of Hartington, NE and Clarence (Angela) Jansen of Fordyce, NE; four sisters: Rita Sudbeck of Bow Valley, NE, Loretta Schulte of Bow Valley, NE, Clara Rolles of Wynot, NE, and Lorraine (Leo) Schulte of Hartington, NE; sister-in-law,

Mary Ann Jansen of Crofton, NE and many nieces and nephews and cousins.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Francis on September 9, 1993, son-in-law, Bill Roeder, her parents, and three brothers and their wives, Martin and Alice, George, and Elmer and Rosemary; sister-in-law, Mary Jansen, brothers-in-law: Marvin Sudbeck, Claudie Schulte, and Alfred Rolles.

The family wishes for memorials to be directed to: Sacred Heart Catholic School.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
 March 26, 2012



Online condolences at:
 www.opsahl-kostelfuneralhome.com

Shirley Schumacher

HARTINGTON, Neb. — Shirley J. Schumacher, 82, of Hartington, Neb., died suddenly on Saturday, March 24, 2012, at her residence.

Mass of Christian Burial is at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday at Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Hartington, with the Rev. Jeffery Loseke officiating. Burial will be at St. Michael's cemetery in Hartington.

Visitation is 4-8 p.m. Tuesday from 4-8 p.m., with a vigil service at 7 p.m., at Wintz Funeral Home, Hartington. Visitation will continue on Wednesday at church one hour prior to services.

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Our Thoughts And Prayers Are With Them
 Our care and concern does not end with the funeral service. This week we remember with family and friends the anniversary of the deaths of:

Phyllis Woehl
who passed away on
March 28, 2011

Deborah Jo Flemming
who passed away on
April 1, 2011

This remembrance is brought to you free of charge. If you have a loved one you would like remembered, contact us at Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home & Crematory. Guiding and serving families with compassion and trust.

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