

## Nigeria's President Refused Int. Help

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP) — The president of Nigeria for weeks refused international help to search for more than 300 girls abducted from a school by Islamic extremists, one in a series of missteps that have led to growing international outrage against the government.

The United Kingdom, Nigeria's former colonizer, first said it was ready to help in a news release the day after the mass abduction on April 15, and made a formal offer of assistance on April 18, according to the British Foreign Office. And the U.S. has said its embassy and staff agencies offered help and were in touch with Nigeria "from day one" of the crisis, according to Secretary of State John Kerry.

Yet it was only on Tuesday and Wednesday, almost a month later, that President Goodluck Jonathan accepted help from the United States, Britain, France and China.

The delay underlines what has been a major problem in the attempt to find the girls: an apparent lack of urgency on the part of the government and military, for reasons that include a reluctance to bring in outsiders as well as possible infiltration by the extremists.

Jonathan bristled last week when he said U.S. President Barack Obama, in a telephone conversation about aid, had brought up alleged human rights abuses by Nigerian security forces. Jonathan also acknowledged that his government might be penetrated by insurgents from Boko Haram, the extremist group that kidnapped the girls. Last year, he said he suspected Boko Haram terrorists might be in the executive, legislative and judiciary arms of government along with the police and armed forces.

## Fighting In Iraqi Province Hits Business

BAGHDAD (AP) — Fighting in Iraq's western Anbar province, now in its fifth month, appears to have bogged down, with government forces unable to drive out Islamic militants who took over one of the area's main cities. But the impact is being felt much further, with the repercussions rippling through the country's economy to hit consumers and businesses.

The large, desert province is a major crossroads. The main highways linking Baghdad and other parts of Iraq to Syria and Jordan run through it. So fighting has not only dislodged thousands of residents from their homes and forced shutdowns of their businesses. It has also disrupted shipping, inflating prices of goods in Baghdad and elsewhere. Fears of the road have gotten so bad Iraq has had to stop shipments of oil to Jordan.

Anwar Salah, co-owner of al-Baqjee travel agency in Baghdad, said his company used to run more than 13 trips a day by SUVs shuttling passengers between Baghdad and the Jordanian capital, Amman.

Now people avoid the highway, which runs near the flash-point Anbar cities of Fallujah and Anbar, fearing militant checkpoints or clashes. So his firm is down to one trip every other day, and profits have plunged by 90 percent, he said.

"Most of the drivers who used to work for me are now either jobless or working in other professions," he said. "We are part of the country's miserable situation."

## Ark. Plans To Appeal Marriage Ruling

EUREKA SPRINGS, Ark. (AP) — The state's top lawyer will ask the Arkansas Supreme Court to review a lower court's decision to overturn a 2004 constitutional amendment banning gay marriage.

Attorney General Dustin McDaniel announced his intent to appeal to the high court late Saturday night, but not before 15 licenses were issued for same-sex couples in northwest Arkansas' Carroll County, heralding the arrival of gay marriage in the Bible Belt.

"Thank God," Jennifer Rambo said after Carroll County Deputy Clerk Jane Osborn issued a marriage license to her and Kristin Seaton, a former volleyball player at the University of Arkansas. The Fort Smith couple had traveled overnight to ensure they'd be first in line, and wed moments later on a sidewalk near the courthouse.

Carroll County was believed to be the only county that issued marriage licenses Saturday. Several courthouses were open for early primary-election voting but staffers said they were not prepared to issue marriage licenses.

Pulaski County Circuit Judge Chris Piazza paved the way for the marriages Friday with a ruling that removed a 10-year-old barrier, saying a constitutional amendment overwhelmingly passed by voters in 2004 banning gay marriage was "an unconstitutional attempt to narrow the definition of equality." Piazza's ruling also overturned a 1997 state law banning gay marriage.

## Victims Of Balloon Crash Remembered

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — One was the constant in Richmond women's basketball, the beloved assistant coach who had been on staff for 15 seasons, remaining through two coaching changes. The other was hardly out of college, always cheerful and willing to help.

Associate head coach Ginny Doyle and director of basketball operations Natalie Lewis were killed Friday in a fiery hot-air balloon crash along with the pilot, Daniel T. Kirk, who had 20 years of flying experience and was affectionately known as "Capt. Kirk." The three were mourned Sunday by friends, family and colleagues alike.

"There's not a person in this business that doesn't see Ginny as just a light," Joanne Boyle, now the coach at Virginia, said of Doyle, who was on her staff with the Spiders from 2002-05. "She was just a light for other people, and when you talk about this business and the genuineness and caring about the kids and what's best for the student-athletes, she epitomized that."

Doyle, 44, was hired by Bob Foley at Richmond in 1999. When Boyle got her first head coaching job, replacing Foley at Richmond, Doyle "just rose to the top" in an interview and Boyle decided to keep her on staff.

# Insurgents: Ukraine Region Opts For Sovereignty

BY PETER LEONARD  
Associated Press

DONETSK, Ukraine — Ninety percent of voters in a key industrial region in eastern Ukraine came out in favor of sovereignty Sunday, pro-Russian insurgents said in announcing preliminary results of a twin referendum that is certain to deepen the turmoil in the country.

Roman Lyagin, election chief of the self-styled Donetsk People's Republic, said around 75 percent of the Donetsk region's 3 million or so eligible voters cast ballots, and the vast majority backed self-rule.

With no international election monitors in place, it was all but impossible to verify the insurgents' claims. The preliminary vote count was announced just two hours after the polls closed in an election conducted via paper ballots.

A second referendum organized by pro-Russian separatists was held Sunday in eastern Ukraine's industrial Luhansk region, but no immediate results were released.

Ukraine's central government and the West had condemned the balloting as a sham and a violation of international law, and they have accused Moscow of orchestrating the unrest in a possible attempt to grab another piece of the country weeks after the annexation of Crimea.

The results of the two referendums could hasten the breakup of the country and worsen what is already the gravest crisis between the West and Russia since the end of the Cold War.

Although the voting in the

two regions with a combined population of 6.5 million appeared mostly peaceful, armed men identified as members of the Ukrainian national guard opened fire on a crowd outside the town hall in Krasnoarmeisk, and an official with the region's insurgents said people were killed. It was not clear how many.

The bloodshed took place hours after dozens of armed men shut down the voting in the town.

The shooting starkly demonstrated the hair-trigger tensions in the east, where pro-Russian separatists have seized government buildings and clashed with Ukrainian forces over the past month.

Even before the results were announced, Ukraine's Foreign Ministry called the twin referendums a "criminal farce." The U.S. and other Western governments said they wouldn't recognize the outcome.

Earlier in the day, the head of the referendum organizers in Donetsk said the ultimate status of the region would be discussed later and would include the possibility of secession or annexation by Russia.

"We are just saying to the world that we want changes, we want to be heard," election commission head Roman Lyagin said.

The violence in Krasnoarmeisk, about 30 kilometers (20 miles) from the regional capital, Donetsk, came hours after armed men, one of whom said they were from the national guard, put a stop to the voting and took control of town hall.

In the evening, more armed men arrived in a van, and a scuffle broke out with people gathered around the building. Then the men fired shots.

An Associated Press photographer who witnessed the shooting said two people lay motionless on the ground. Insurgent leader Denis Pushilin was quoted by the ITAR-Tass news agency as saying there were an unspecified number of deaths.

Over the past few weeks, the Ukrainian government and the West have accused Russia of trying to destabilize the country or create a pretext for another invasion. Russia — which annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula just days after voters there approved secession in a March referendum — has rejected the accusations.

Russian President Vladimir Putin had asked the organizers of the latest referendums to delay the vote in an apparent attempt to ease the crisis. The insurgents refused.

At one polling station at a school in Donetsk, turnout was brisk in the first hour of voting. All voting slips that could be seen in the clear ballot boxes showed that self-rule had been selected.

Most opponents of sovereignty appeared likely to stay away from the polls rather than risk drawing attention to themselves.

Darya, a 25-year-old medical worker who would not give her last name, said she saw no point in casting a ballot, since the vote had no legal force.

"There were no notices about this referendum anywhere, about where and when it was happening," she said. "In any case, it is not valid, so there was no reason to take part."

There were no immediate signs of any outright intimidation by pro-Russian forces Sunday, and insurgents near

the polls were not wearing their usual balaclavas.

The haphazard nature of the referendums was in full display at Spartak, a leafy village on the fringes of Donetsk.

Villagers were unable to vote for about three hours after the polls opened because election officials failed to bring a ballot box. Finally, an election organizer arrived with a voting urn crudely fashioned from cardboard boxes and sealed with tape.

Most present said they were voting in favor of autonomy and against the interim government headed by acting President Oleksandr Turchynov. One said she would not take part in a nationwide presidential election set for May 25.

"I don't agree with what is happening in the country. And I want some changes for the better. What is happening on May 25 is not honest, truthful or in our best interests. And that is why I am voting today," said Irina Zelyonova, 30, cradling her baby in her arms.

Turchynov and Ukraine's caretaker government came to power in February following the ouster of Kremlin-friendly President Viktor Yanukovich after months of protests in Kiev. Moscow and many in Ukraine's east have accused the new government of intending to trample the rights of eastern Ukraine's Russian-speakers.

## Trial Of Gadhafi Son Adjourned To May 25

BY ESAM MOHAMED  
Associated Press

TRIPOLI, Libya — The trial of the son of late Libyan dictator Moammar Gadhafi and 36 others was adjourned to later this month after Seif al-Islam's lawyer, appointed by the government, failed to turn up to the session, lawyers and the official news agency reported Sunday.

The session in Tripoli was linked by video conferencing to the city of Zintan, where the junior Gadhafi is held. Eight other defendants also appeared by video link from the city of Misrata. The official news agency LANA said only 31 defendants attended Sunday.

Defense lawyer Ibrahim Abu-Ayesha said the brief session was adjourned after the judge found that the lawyer assigned to Seif al-Islam Gadhafi, Samiha al-Kasseh, failed to appear at the session, the third since the trial opened. It was not clear why the lawyer failed to show up. When asked if he had any requests, Seif al-Islam Gadhafi responded briefly by saying: "Just your good health," a polite expression to indicate that he wants nothing.

Thursday at church one hour prior to services.

## THOUGHTS For Your Family



Directors: Steve, Jerry, Jim & Paul Wintz

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### PLACING MINDS AND BODIES TO REST

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Robert La Fosse

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## OBITUARIES

### Marie Heimes

Marie E. Heimes, 90, of Hartington, Nebraska, died on Sunday, May 11, 2014, at the Golden Living Center in Hartington.

Mass of Christian Burial is at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, May 15, at Holy Trinity Catholic

Church in Hartington with the Rev. Jeffrey Loseke officiating. Burial will be at St. Michael's Cemetery in Hartington.

Visitation is 4-8 p.m. Wednesday, with a vigil service at 7 p.m., at the Wintz Funeral Home in Hartington. Visitation will continue on

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*Flag Drop Box Dedication Ceremony*  
*In conjunction with Armed Forces Day please join us on*  
**Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**2:30 p.m.**  
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*Will reveal and place a flag drop box for the public to retire their weathered American Flags (This flag drop box was beautifully designed and painted by artist Mickey Harris)*

Ceremony will include:  
\* Lowering of old flag  
\* Reflections of the 13 folds by Ernest-Bowyer VFW 791 Honor Guard  
\* Flag drop box dedicated by Rev. Rod Veldhuizen  
\* Raising of the new flag  
\* Pledge of Allegiance  
\* Special Guests will be the Patriot Guard Riders to display the flags of all 50 states  
\* Refreshments will be served

*Please join us for this special dedication ceremony. You are welcome to bring your flag to retire.*

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