

ISIS Claims Responsibility For Attack

PHOENIX (AP) — The Islamic State group claimed responsibility Tuesday for the assault on a Texas cartoon contest that featured images of the Prophet Muhammad, but counterterrorism experts said IS has a history of asserting involvement in attacks in which it had no operational role. That suggests the two gunmen could have carried out their own lone wolf-style strike before they were shot and killed at the scene of Sunday’s shooting in the Dallas suburb of Garland.

Federal officials identified the pair as Elton Simpson and Nadir Soofi, both Americans who lived in Phoenix. They were described as amicable and quiet and were sometimes seen feeding stray cats outside their apartment complex. Federal authorities had been scrutinizing Simpson’s social media presence recently but had no indication he was plotting an attack, said one federal official familiar with the investigation.

White House press secretary Josh Earnest said it’s too early to say whether the Islamic State group played a role in the assault. He said U.S. officials are working aggressively to counter terrorist efforts to use social media to radicalize individuals in the United States.

IS recently urged those in the United States, Europe and Australia who cannot safely travel to fight in Syria and Iraq to carry out jihad in the countries where they live. An audio statement on the extremist group’s Al Bayan radio station called the men “two soldiers of the caliphate.”

Clinton To Outline Immigration Agenda

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton intends to draw an early distinction with Republicans on illegal immigration, pointing to a pathway to citizenship as an essential part of any overhaul in Congress.

Clinton was laying the foundation of her immigration agenda Tuesday in her first stop in Nevada since launching her presidential campaign. After years of delays in Congress, Latinos and immigration activists are watching Clinton’s statements closely for signs of how she might break a legislative logjam on immigration and whether she would extend President Barack Obama’s executive actions to shield millions of immigrants from deportation.

“We hope that she leans in and really issues a challenge on the issue,” said Clarissa Martmnez-De-Castro, deputy vice president of the National Council of La Raza.

Clinton has backed Obama’s unsuccessful pitch for a comprehensive immigration overhaul, including a pathway to citizenship for immigrants in the country illegally, and supported his announcement last year halting deportations of certain immigrants.

The issue could be pivotal in the 2016 presidential race. Obama received strong support from Hispanic voters during his two presidential bids and immigration turned into a stumbling block for GOP nominee Mitt Romney, who received only 27 percent of the Hispanic vote in 2012 and struggled in battleground states like Florida, Colorado and Nevada where Latinos are influential.

Huckabee Declares Presidential Bid

HOPE, Ark. (AP) — Mike Huckabee declared his presidential candidacy Tuesday, counting on his brand of conservative populism to make his second White House bid more successful than his first. In 2008, he captivated evangelical Republicans but couldn’t build wide enough support to win the Republican nomination.

The former Arkansas governor announced his 2016 bid in the hometown he shares with former President Bill Clinton, becoming the sixth notable Republican to enter the campaign, with more to come.

“Power, money and political influence have left a lot of Americans behind,” Huckabee told supporters in a speech railing against “big government bailouts” and pledging elimination of the IRS, “the biggest bully in America.”

A populist but no Democrat, he did not endorse a minimum wage increase, instead calling for policies encouraging a “maximum wage” for workers. But he did align himself with labor interests in criticizing “unbalanced trade deals” and describing President Barack Obama’s immigration policy as a way to “import low-wage labor, undercut American workers and drive wages lower than the Dead Sea.”

The ordained minister — he was Arkansas Baptist Convention president before getting into politics — speaks the language of faith, and he played up the cultural conservatism learned in this small town where many of his relatives — and a few Clinton relatives — still live. He stood by his opposition to abortion rights and same-sex marriage, declaring that “the Supreme Court is not the supreme being, and they cannot overturn the laws of nature or of nature’s God.”

Marine General Named Joint Chiefs Head

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama tapped a highly respected combat commander as his next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Tuesday, signaling that the battles against al-Qaida and Islamic State militants threatening the Middle East and the West remain top priorities for the nation’s military despite years of trying to change the focus to Asia.

Announcing his selection of Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford Jr. during a Rose Garden ceremony, Obama said America’s armed forces must be ready to meet a broad range of challenges, and that Dunford has proven to be one of the military’s most highly regarded strategic thinkers.

“We have to keep training Afghan forces and remain relentless against Al Qaida. We have to push back against ISIL and strengthen forces in Syria and build moderate opposition in Syria,” said Obama, using an alternate name for the Islamic State group. “We have to stand united with our allies in Europe and keep rebalancing our posture as a Pacific power. We have to keep investing in new capabilities to meet growing threats, including cyberattacks.”

As the U.S. started to look beyond the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Pentagon had begun to increase its focus on the Asia Pacific region, where the North Korea threat was escalating and China was flexing its military muscles. But that has been eclipsed by the march of Islamic State militants across Syria and Iraq, and the group’s effort to expand to other regions and import the fight to the West.

In choosing Dunford, Obama picked a battle commander who led forces in the initial invasion into Iraq and more recently was in charge of the Afghanistan war coalition during a key transitional period from 2013-14. And if confirmed, Dunford also represents a sense of continuity, succeeding Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, who will have served as chairman for four years. Both men are known as intellectual and charismatic leaders who connect well with their troops.

Marathon Bomber’s Lawyers Plead Case

BOSTON (AP) — Dzhokhar Tsarnaev’s lawyers called a Russian historian and a psychiatrist to the stand Tuesday in a bid to save the Boston Marathon bomber from the death penalty by portraying him as the product of a dysfunctional family from a turbulent corner of the world.

Dr. Alexander Niss, a psychiatrist who treated Tsarnaev’s father in Boston from 2003 to 2005, said he diagnosed the elder Tsarnaev with post-traumatic stress disorder after he reported being tortured in a Russian camp during the Chechen wars with Russia in the 1990s.

Niss said Anzor Tsarnaev, an ethnic Chechen, showed typical symptoms of PTSD, including anxiety, panic attacks, flashbacks and paranoia. He said Tsarnaev also complained of headaches, dizziness, nosebleeds and other physical ailments, and during one phase of his treatment, was going to the emergency room almost every day.

“He was a sick guy,” Niss said.

Niss took the stand during the penalty phase of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev’s trial, during which the jury will decide whether the 21-year-old former college student should get the death penalty or life in prison for the 2013 bombing that killed three people and wounded more than 260.

BY BRIAN WITTE

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Attorney General Loretta Lynch pledged Tuesday to improve the city’s police department after meeting with the family of a man who was fatally injured in police custody.

“We’re here to hold your hands and provide support,” Lynch said in a meeting with faith and community leaders, including members of Congress.

The new attorney general met privately at the University of Baltimore with Freddie Gray’s family, days after the state’s attorney charged six police officers involved in Gray’s arrest. Gray’s injury in police custody and death a week later sparked protests and riots that prompted Maryland’s governor to bring in the National Guard.

Lynch was joined by the head of the Civil Rights Division, Vanita Gupta, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services Director Ronald Davis and Community Relations Service Director Grande Lum. Lynch met with Reps. Elijah Cummings, John Sarbanes and C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger and Sens. Barbara Mikulski and Ben Cardin.

“This is a flashpoint situation,” Lynch said. “We lost a young man’s life and it begins to represent so many things.” The FBI and the Justice



LLOYD FOX/BALTIMORE SUN/TNS
U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch, right, meets with officers at the Baltimore Police Department’s Central District on Tuesday.

Department are investigating Gray’s death for potential civil rights violations. The Justice Department is expected to release results of a separate review of the police department’s use of force practices in the coming weeks.

Meanwhile, Baltimore City Council President Jack Young renewed his request that the Justice Department conduct a comprehensive, civil rights investigation into the policies, procedures and practices of the city’s police department.

Lynch later met privately with Police Commissioner

Anthony Batts at police headquarters. She then met about a dozen officers who had been on the streets when violence broke out, telling them they joined a noble profession.

“We are here to help you work through these struggles,” Lynch said. “To all of you on the front lines, I want to thank you. You really have become the face of law enforcement.”

Lynch also met with Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake at City Hall.

Lynch returned to the University of Baltimore on Tuesday afternoon to meet

with a group of residents who have protested against police brutality and excessive force.

Lynch, who is in just her second week on the job, has spoken repeatedly of the need to mend relationships between police and minority communities. At her January confirmation hearing, she described herself as being personally “pained” by the on-going tensions, and spoke at her swearing-in ceremony last week of the need to “restore trust and faith both in our laws and in those of us who enforce them.”

Texas Muslims Are On Edge Amid Protests, Contest Attack

BY JAMIE STENGLE

Associated Press

DALLAS — When an outspoken opponent of radical Islam sought to mock Muhammad in Texas, home to one of the nation’s largest Islamic communities, local Muslims were encouraged to ignore her, and they did.

No one protested when Pamela Geller’s cartoon contest attracted about 200 people to suburban Dallas Sunday, even though some Muslims in Texas were already feeling aggrieved and fearful over growing anti-Islamic sentiment in the state.

Then, two men with attack rifles drove in from Arizona and opened fire on officers guarding the conference center in Garland. Both were shot dead, an officer was shot in the leg, and from the other side of the world, the Islamic State group made an unproven claim of responsibility.

“This is the exposure that they wanted and this is the divisiveness that they wanted to bring,” said Omar Suleiman, resident scholar at the Valley Ranch Islamic Center in Irving, a Dallas suburb with a sizable Islamic community.

“We condemn obviously the attack in the strongest terms, and we are glad that the police officer is OK,” Suleiman added. “This is what extremists on both sides want:

whether it’s Geller or whether it’s ISIS. They want this all-out war. That’s not what we’re about.”

Anti-Islam sentiment has been reverberating in Texas, from the state Capitol to local governments. Tensions rose in Irving after the City Council endorsed one of several bills to forbid judges from rulings based on “foreign laws.

Islam holds that any depictions of its prophet are deeply offensive, and yet Geller’s contest rules sought images that engage “in criticism of and mockery of Muhammad and the belief system and ideology that underlies global jihad terrorism.” She also brought in a speaker known for his outspoken criticism of Islam, Dutch lawmaker Geert Wilders.

Geller, president of the New York-based American Freedom Defense Initiative, booked Sunday’s event at the same venue where she led about 1,000 protesters at a January fundraiser that the Chicago-based group Sound Vision held to combat negative perceptions of Islam.

“We are standing against the most brutal, radical and extreme ideology on the face of the Earth,” Geller declared.

A man with a bullhorn repeatedly called Muhammad a pedophile. One person chanted “Go back to your own countries! We don’t want you here!” Another held a sign

saying “Insult those who behead others.”

Texas was a natural stop for Sound Vision, with more people associated with Muslim congregations, about 422,000, or 1.7 percent of its population, than any other state, according to a 2010 census by the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies. Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston each have about 155,000 Muslim adherents.

Later in January, hecklers greeted Muslims for the first time at their lobbying day at the Texas Capitol in Austin.

Republican state Rep. Molly White told her staff to ask visiting Muslims to declare allegiance to America. Republican Gov. Greg Abbott rebuked such attitudes, saying “we must have civil discourse.”

But six bills addressing foreign laws, which opponents believe are anti-Muslim, are now pending in the Texas Legislature. Similar legislation banning judges from violating state and federal laws has been introduced this year in almost 20 states, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. Nine other states have passed them.

The lawmakers have gone out of their way to avoid mentioning Sharia, or Islamic law, but their constituents have done it for them.

With Fondest Memories

We remember those who have passed away and are especially dear to us.

On Saturday, May 23rd we will publish in print and online at Yankton.net a Memorial Day section devoted to those who are gone but not forgotten.

Aneta Burrows

Dec. 30, 1960-Nov. 8, 2002

Your courage and bravery still inspire us all, and the memory of your smile fills us with joy and laughter.

Dan, Ann & Sarah

Select one of the verses below to accompany your tribute.

- We hold you in our thoughts and memories forever.
- May God cradle you in his arms, now and forever.
- Forever missed, never forgotten. May God hold you in the palm of His hand.
- Thank you for the wonderful days we shared together. My prayers will be with you until we meet again.
- The days we shared were sweet. I long to see you again in Gods heavenly glory.
- Your courage and bravery still inspire us all, and the memory of your smile fills us with joy and laughter.
- Though out of sight, you'll forever be in my heart and mind.
- May the light of peace shine on your face for eternity.
- May God's angels guide you and protect you throughout time.
- You were a light in our life that burns forever in our hearts.
- May God's graces shine over you for all time.
- You are in our thoughts and prayers from morning to night and from year to year.
- We send this message with a loving kiss for eternal rest and happiness.
- May the Lord bless you with His graces and warm, loving heart.
- I have written my own message and it is included.

Name of deceased _____

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