



JIMI ALLEN/CHICAGO TRIBUNE/TNS  
House Speaker Dennis Hastert speaks from his home office in Batavia on Sept. 12, 2001 to media about his experience during the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on America and the government.

# AP: Hastert Paid To Conceal Claims Of Sexual Abuse

BY ERIC TUCKER  
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Associated Press

CHICAGO — Former House Speaker Dennis Hastert paid hush money to conceal claims that the Illinois Republican sexually molested someone decades ago, a person familiar with the allegations said Friday.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because the investigation is ongoing and the allegations are not contained in an indictment issued Thursday. The specific nature of the claims was not immediately clear.

The federal indictment accused Hastert of agreeing to pay \$3.5 million to keep a person from the suburban Chicago town where he was a longtime high school teacher and wrestling coach silent about "prior misconduct," but the court papers did not detail the wrongdoing.

Several media outlets reported similar details Friday, citing unnamed federal officials.

The *Los Angeles Times*, which was the first to report the specifics, cited two federal law enforcement officials, one of whom said Hastert paid a male to keep quiet about allegations that the former speaker molested him back in his coaching days.

The official said the case had nothing

to do with public corruption or Hastert's time in elected office.

The indictment accused Hastert of agreeing to pay the money to a person identified in the document only as "Individual A," to "compensate for and conceal his prior misconduct against" that person.

It noted that Hastert was a high school history teacher and coach from 1965 to 1981 in suburban Yorkville, west of Chicago. It went on to say that Individual A has been a resident of Yorkville and has known Hastert for most of Individual A's life, but it did not describe their relationship.

Legal experts say the fact that federal prosecutors noted Hastert's tenure in Yorkville in the indictment's first few sentences strongly suggests some connection between the allegations and that time and place.

"Notice the teacher and coach language," said Jeff Cramer, a former federal prosecutor and head of the Chicago office of the investigation firm Kroll. "Feds don't put in language like that unless it's relevant."

No one has contacted the school district where Hastert worked to report any misconduct involving him, school officials Friday said in a statement. The district did not learn of the indictment until Thursday.

Hastert, who has not been arrested, was a little-known GOP leader when he was chosen to succeed Newt Gingrich as

speaker. Hastert was picked after favored Louisiana Rep. Bob Livingston resigned following his admission of several sexual affairs.

As speaker, Hastert pushed President George W. Bush's legislative agenda, helping pass a massive tax cut and expanding federal prescription drug benefits. During those years, he was second in the line for the presidency, after the vice president.

He retired from Congress in 2007 after eight years as speaker, making him the longest-serving Republican House speaker. After leaving Congress, he worked as a lobbyist in Washington.

A spokesman for the Dickstein Shapiro LLC law and lobbying firm said Thursday that Hastert had resigned.

The indictment charges the 73-year-old with one count of evading bank regulations by withdrawing \$952,000 in increments of less than \$10,000 to skirt reporting requirements. He also is charged with one count of lying to the FBI about the reason for the unusual withdrawals.

Each count carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Hastert did not respond to repeated phone calls and emails from the AP seeking comment. He did not appear in public Thursday evening or Friday, and it was not clear if he had an attorney.

Prosecutors said Hastert will be ordered to appear for arraignment, but no date had been set.

## Sepp Blatter Secures Another Term

ZURICH (AP) — In the end, nothing could stop Sepp Blatter. Not a far-reaching corruption scandal. Not a tarnished international image. Not a young prince who gave him a stronger-than-expected challenge.

Despite the biggest crisis in FIFA's 111-year history, Blatter emerged victorious once again Friday, winning re-election as president of world soccer's governing body for a fifth term and proving he is the sport's ultimate survivor.

"I am now the president of everybody," the 79-year-old Blatter crowed after defeating Prince Ali bin al-Hussein of Jordan to secure another four years in office as one of the most powerful men in sports.

Blatter was declared the victor after Prince Ali withdrew following the first round of secret balloting among FIFA's 209 member federations. Blatter won the first ballot 133-73, seven votes short of the two-thirds majority required for victory.

## Washington Removes Cuba From List

HAVANA (AP) — The Obama administration formally removed Cuba from the U.S. terrorism blacklist Friday, a decision hailed in Cuba as the healing of a decades-old wound and an important step toward normalizing relations between the Cold War foes.

Secretary of State John Kerry signed off on rescinding Cuba's "state sponsor of terrorism" designation exactly 45 days after the Obama administration informed Congress of its intent to do so on April 14. Lawmakers had that amount of time to weigh in and try to block the move, but did not do so.

"The 45-day congressional pre-notification period has expired, and the secretary of state has made the final decision to rescind Cuba's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism, effective today, May 29, 2015," the State Department said in a statement.

"While the United States has significant concerns and disagreements with a wide range of Cuba's policies and actions, these fall outside the criteria relevant to the rescission of a state sponsor of terrorism designation," the statement said.

The step comes as officials from the two countries continue to hash out details for restoring full diplomatic relations, including opening embassies in Washington and Havana and returning ambassadors to the two countries for the first time since the U.S. severed diplomatic relations with the island in January 1961. The removal of Cuba from the terrorism list had been a key Cuban demand.

## Nigeria's President To End Insurgency

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — Nigeria's new president was sworn in on Friday and pledged to tackle Boko Haram "head on," asserting the fight against the Islamic extremists wouldn't be won until hundreds of schoolgirls abducted last year and other kidnapping victims were brought home alive.

Muhammadu Buhari's new administration won a signal of support from the United States, which indicated it was prepared to increase military aid.

The inauguration turned into a nationwide celebration by Nigerians welcoming their country's newly reinforced democracy after Buhari became the first candidate to defeat a sitting president at the polls since the end of military rule in 1999.

With dancing and the release of white doves symbolizing peace, Nigerians hailed the handover of power in an African nation marked by superlatives: the most populous nation, the biggest oil producer, the largest economy.

Nigeria also confronts the most deadly conflict on the continent — the insurgency by Boko Haram that has killed more than 13,000 people and driven more than 1.5 million from their homes.

## Man Impaled, Killed By Fish's Bill

HONOLULU (AP) — A Hawaii man was killed Friday after he was apparently impaled by the bill of a fish, a Hawaii County fire official said.

Witnesses at Honokohau Harbor in Kailua-Kona reported that a man in his 40s jumped from the pier in an apparent attempt to catch a billfish, likely a short nose spear fish, West Hawaii Acting Battalion Chief John Whitman said.

"All we know is next thing they know, the man is seen floating," he said. Firefighters tried to resuscitate the man, who had a puncture wound to his right, upper torso. The man was taken to Kona Hospital, where he was pronounced dead, Whitman said.

A witness told the fire department the man shot the fish with a spear gun. It's not clear what happened to the fish, which Whitman said was estimated to be about 30 pounds. That type of fish has a bill that can be up to a foot long, he said.

He said police will investigate.

The man's identity has not been released. He's a Big Island resident who is in the charter boat business, Whitman said.

This isn't the first time he's heard of bill fish fatally impaling someone, Whitman said. "They are very aggressive animals," he said. "If you mess with them they defend themselves pretty good."

## Two Hurt In French Quarter Shooting

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — An afternoon shooting in New Orleans' busy French Quarter left two people injured and rattled both merchants and tourists.

Police spokesman Officer Frank Robertson said the two adult male victims are believed to have been in a car at an intersection in the quarter when gunfire broke out Friday afternoon.

Robertson said their wounds were not considered to be life-threatening. He had no information about possible suspects or motives.

## India's Heat Wave Tests Water Supply; Death Toll Over 1,800

HYDERABAD, India (AP) — Dizzying temperatures caused water shortages in thousands of Indian villages and killed hundreds more people over the past day, driving the death toll from a weeklong heat wave to at least 1,826, officials said Friday.

Meteorological officials called the heat wave "severe" and warned that it would continue for at least two days across a huge swathe of the South Asian country from Tamil Nadu in the south to the Himalayan foothill state of Himachal Pradesh.

Most of those killed by heat-related conditions including dehydration and heat stroke have been in the southern states of Andhra



Pradesh and Telangana, where 100 people died just on Thursday as temperatures hovered at about 43 degrees Celsius (109 degrees Fahrenheit).

Thousands of water tank-

ers were delivering supplies to more than 4,000 villages and hamlets facing acute water shortages in the central state of Maharashtra, state officials told the Press Trust of India news agency.

People across India were plunging into rivers, staying in the shade and drinking lots of water to try to beat the heat. Scorched crops and dying wildlife were reported, with some animals succumbing to thirst.

Many farmers and construction workers struggling with poverty were still working outdoors despite the risks. They along with the impoverished elderly were among the most vulnerable.

Cooling monsoon rains were expected next week in the south before gradually

advancing north.

However, forecasting service AccuWeather warned of prolonged drought conditions, with the monsoon likely to be disrupted by a more active typhoon season over the Pacific.

"While there will be some rainfall on the region, the pattern could evolve into significant drought and negatively impact agriculture from central India to much of Pakistan," senior meteorologist Jason Nicholls at AccuWeather said in a statement.

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