

U.S. Embassy, NATO Attacked In Afghan Capital

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Teams of insurgents firing rocket-propelled grenades and automatic weapons struck at the U.S. Embassy, NATO headquarters and other buildings in the heart of the Afghan capital Tuesday, raising fresh doubts about the Afghans' ability to secure their nation as U.S. and other foreign troops begin to withdraw.

Seven Afghans were killed and 15 wounded in the coordinated daylight attack, which sent foreigners dashing for cover and terrified the city from midday well into the night as U.S. helicopters buzzed overhead. No embassy or NATO staff members were hurt.

Late Tuesday, at least two gunmen remained holed up on the top floors of an apartment building from which they and other militants had attacked the heavily fortified embassy.

The militants' seeming ability to strike at will in the most heavily defended part of Kabul suggested that they may have had help from rogue elements in the Afghan security forces. The attacks also coincided with suicide bombings elsewhere in the capital — the first time insurgents have organized such a complex assault against multiple targets in separate parts of the city.

Debt 'Supercommittee' Aims For Less Red Ink

WASHINGTON (AP) — Digging in for a bruising struggle, Republicans on Congress' powerful deficit-fighting "supercommittee" targeted Social Security and government health care spending Tuesday while Democrats pressed for higher tax revenue as part of any deal to reduce red ink by at least \$1.2 trillion over the next decade.

There were no ultimatums from either side, and there was even a fleeting suggestion that tax reform might eventually clear the way for the bipartisan agreement that both sides say they want.

Yet with the Census Bureau reporting national poverty at a 28-year high and partisan struggles flaring elsewhere in Congress, the events underscored the challenge the 12-member panel faces as it gropes for a deal that can clear Congress and win President Barack Obama's signature by year's end.

With the nation's debt high and surging and the population aging, "Citizens will either have to pay more for their government, accept less in government services and benefits, or both," Doug Elmendorf, the head of the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, told supercommittee.

Though the choices are difficult, he said, the problem "need not be viewed as unsolvable."

Bus Hit By Train While Trying To Cross Tracks

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — A train slammed into a bus trying to beat it across the railroad tracks during rush hour in the Argentine capital Tuesday, rammng the vehicle into a platform and then striking another locomotive head-on. At least nine people, including the bus driver, were killed and 212 injured, authorities said.

The force of the arriving train reduced the bus to a fraction of its width as it became wedged against the station platform in the densely populated Flores neighborhood. The front of the train then slammed into another train that was preparing to leave in the opposite direction. Video of the crash shows the bus driving around a partially lowered barrier despite flashing lights that warned of the oncoming train.

Emergency officials raced to extricate several bodies from under the wreckage left by Tuesday's collision, and helicopters carried the injured to at least seven hospitals around the city.

At least 20 of the injured were in critical condition, Alberto Crescenti, the director-general of Argentina's emergency medical system, told reporters.

Children also were among those injured, said Argentine Transportation Secretary J.P. Schiavi. The deadly crashes happened at 6:15 a.m. local time (5:15 a.m. EDT; 0915 GMT), just when many parents use public transportation to take their children to school.

Motorcyclist Says Bystanders Saved His Life

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah (AP) — A Utah motorcyclist who was pinned under a burning car after a collision expressed his gratitude Tuesday for the help of strangers who lifted the 4,000 pound vehicle to rescue him.

"I'm just very thankful for everyone that helped me out," Brandon Wright told The Associated Press by telephone from his hospital bed. "They saved my life."

Authorities said Wright, 21, was riding his motorcycle Monday near the Utah State University campus in Logan when he collided with a black BMW that was pulling out of a parking lot.

Tire and skid marks on the highway indicate that Wright laid the bike down and slid along the road before colliding with the car, Assistant Police Chief Jeff Curtis said.

The bike hit the car's hood and bounced to the ground, while Wright, who was not wearing helmet, slid under the car and then both vehicles burst into flames, Curtis said.

License Restrictions Could Have Side Effect

CHICAGO (AP) — Strong driver's license laws have led to fewer fatal crashes among 16-year-olds but with a disturbing side effect — more fatal accidents among 18-year-olds, a nationwide study found.

Many states require young drivers to get extensive experience, including driving with an adult, before getting a full license. But in most states those laws only apply to those younger than 18. The new study suggests some teens are just putting off getting a license until they turn 18 — meaning they have little experience and higher odds for a deadly crash.

"There's an incentive right now to skip out and just wait until you're 18," said Scott Masten, the study's lead author and a researcher with California's Department of Motor Vehicles. "In most states you don't even need to have driver education or driver training" if you obtain a license at 18, he said.

"I was actually bummed by my own findings — to find out we're offsetting the benefits" in young drivers so much, he said. "It was quite unexpected."

101-Year-Old Woman Evicted From Home

DETROIT (AP) — A 101-year-old woman was evicted from the southwest Detroit home where she lived for nearly six decades after her 65-year-old son failed to pay the mortgage.

Texana Hollis was evicted Monday and her belongings were placed outside the home. Her son, Warren Hollis, said he didn't pay the bill for several years and disregarded eviction notices.

"I kept it from her because I didn't want to worry her," Warren Hollis told WXYZ-TV for a report that aired Monday night. "I was just so sure it wasn't going to happen."

Wayne County Chief Deputy Treasurer David Szymanski told The Associated Press on Tuesday that the Hollises took out an adjustable-rate mortgage in 2002. A default and foreclosure notice was filed in November.

OBITUARIES

George Eells ton, Neb., died Tuesday, Sept. 13, 2011, at Sunset Manor, Irene. His services are pending at Wintz Funeral Home, Hartington.

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OBAMA:

There's No Reason To Wait On Jobs Bill

ERICA WERNER
Associated Press



Obama

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Imploring Congress to follow his lead, President Barack Obama on Tuesday lobbied lawmakers to adopt his nearly \$450 billion jobs plan, promising it would help workers in the construction industry and rebuild schools in crumbling condition. Said Obama: "My question to Congress is, what on earth are we waiting for?"

From a high school in the critical electoral state of Ohio, Obama delivered a fiery speech to plug his plan. The outdoor audience was receptive to the point of adopting his refrain and chanting it back to him, shouting: "Pass this bill!"

The event had the feel of an Obama re-election event, right down to the music that played as Obama came out to speak, suit coat off and sleeves rolled up on a sunny day. He tailored his latest pitch to how his proposed legislation would help education, built around a \$25 billion spending initiative for school renovations.

In Ohio alone, Obama said, the bill would create jobs for tens of thousands of construction workers.

Yet Republican lawmakers who control the House flatly oppose his plans to pay for his plan by raising taxes on wealthier Americans.

In trying to win over the voting public and build pressure on Congress, Obama has made his pitch in Virginia, the home state of House Republican Leader Eric Cantor, and Ohio, home of House Speaker John Boehner. He will travel on Wednesday to North Carolina.

Republicans on Capitol Hill say the president is merely repackaging ideas they have already rejected. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said Obama was essentially daring Republicans to vote against his ideas again. "I think most people see through all this," McConnell said.

Obama's jobs package would offer tax cuts for workers and employers by reducing the Social Security payroll tax. Spending elements include more money to hire teachers, rebuild schools and pay unemployment benefits. There are also tax credits to encourage businesses to hire veterans and the long-term

unemployed.

He proposes to cover most of the cost, nearly \$400 billion, by limiting the deductions on charitable contributions and other items that wealthy people can take.

There's also \$40 billion from closing oil and gas loopholes, \$18 billion from hiking taxes on certain income made by fund managers, and \$3 billion from changing the tax treatment of corporate jets.

"We've got to make sure that everybody pays their fair share including the wealthiest Americans and biggest corporations," said Obama outside Fort Hayes Arts and Academic High School. "We've got to decide what our priorities are."

Boehner and other Republicans grew notably more skeptical Monday once the White House announced plans to pay for the costly measure entirely with tax increases on the rich and corporations. In turn, Obama renewed his attack on the GOP, contending they're standing in the way just to deny him a political win.

The crowd booed.

"This isn't about giving me a win, it's about giving the American people a win," Obama said.

Nearly 1 In 6 Americans In Poverty, Census Says

BY HOPE YEN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The ranks of the nation's poor have swelled to a record 46.2 million — nearly 1 in 6 Americans — as the prolonged pain of the recession leaves millions still struggling and out of work. And the number without health insurance has reached 49.9 million, the most in over two decades.

The figures are in a Census Bureau report, released Tuesday, that offers a somber snapshot of the economic well-being of U.S. households for last year when joblessness hovered above 9 percent for a second year. The rate is still 9.1 percent at the start of an election year that's sure to focus on the economy and President Barack Obama's stewardship of it.

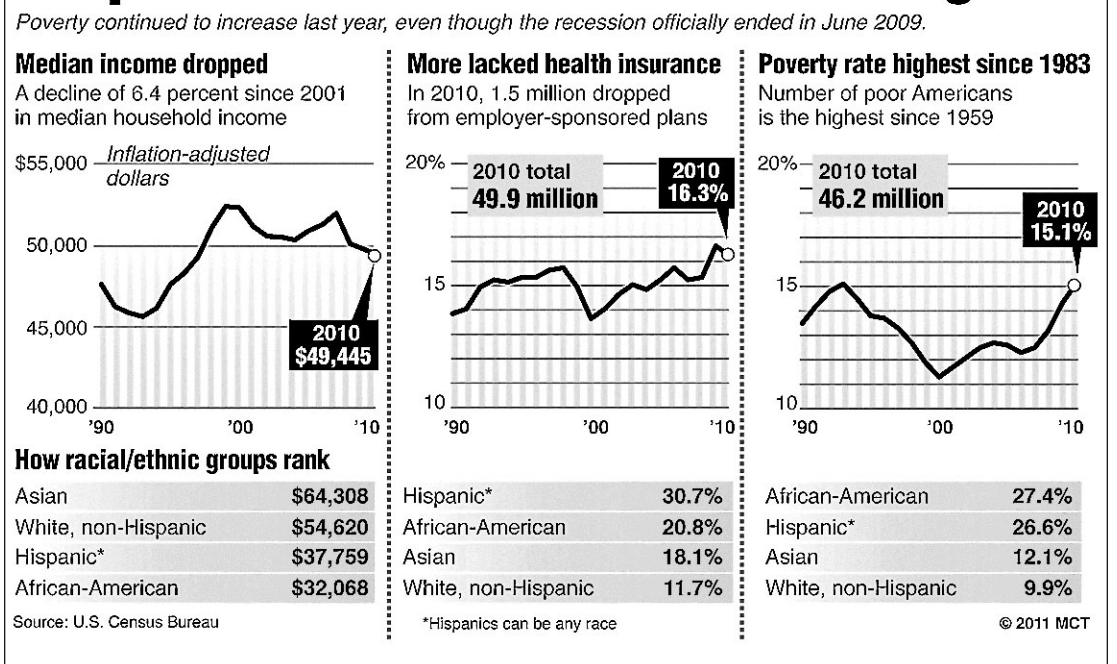
The overall poverty rate climbed to 15.1 percent, from 14.3 percent the previous year, and the rate from 2007-2010 rose faster than for any similar period since the early 1980s when a crippling energy crisis amid government cutbacks contributed to inflation, spiraling interest rates and unemployment.

For last year, the official poverty level was an annual income of \$22,314 for a family of four.

Measured by total numbers, the 46 million now living in poverty are the most on record dating back to when the census began to track in 1959. The 15.1 percent tied the level of 1993 and was the highest since 1983.

Broken down by state, Missis-

Snapshot of U.S. economic well-being



sippi had the highest share of poor people, at 22.7 percent, according to calculations by the Census Bureau. It was followed by Louisiana, the District of Columbia, Georgia, New Mexico and Arizona. On the other end of the scale, New Hampshire had the lowest share, at 6.6 percent.

The share of Americans without health coverage rose from 16.1 percent to 16.3 percent — or 49.9 million people — according to Census

Bureau revisions. The increase was due mostly to continued losses of employer-provided health insurance in the weakened economy.

Congress passed a health overhaul last year to address rising numbers of the uninsured. While the main provisions don't take effect until 2014, one aspect taking effect in late 2010 allowed young adults to be covered under their parents' health insurance until age 26.

The uninsured rate for adults 18 to 24 actually declined last year, from 29.3 percent to 27.2 percent, noted Brett O'Hara, chief of the Health and Disability Statistics branch at the Census Bureau. That was the only age group that posted a decrease, and he said "the law change certainly could be a factor."

For last year, the median — or midpoint — household income was \$49,445, down 2.3 percent from 2009.

Perry Facing New Criticism For Texas Vaccine Order

BY CHRIS TOMLINSON
Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — Four years ago, Gov. Rick Perry put aside his social conservative bona fides and signed an order requiring Texas girls to be vaccinated against HPV.

The human papillomavirus is a sexually spread virus that can cause cervical cancer, and he says his aim was protecting against that cancer. But it didn't take long for angry conservatives in the Legislature to override a measure they thought tacitly approved premarital sex, and for critics to accuse Perry of cronyism.

Now Perry's taking heat on the issue anew as he runs for the presidential nomination of a GOP heavily influenced by conservatives who are sour on the government dictating health care requirements.

Illustrating the delicate politics at play, he's both defending himself and calling his action a mistake.

"If I had it to do over again, I would have done it differently," Perry said Tuesday night as he debated his rivals, insisting that he would have worked with the Legislature instead of unilaterally acting.

But he did not back down from his stance that girls should be vaccinated against the virus, which is generally spread by sexual contact.

He argued that it wasn't a mandate and noted that he in-

"If I had it to do over again, I would have done it differently."

GOV. RICK PERRY

cluded the right for parents to opt out of the vaccinations.

"This was about trying to stop a cancer," he said. "I am always going to err on the side of life."

Not that the explanation satisfied his GOP opponents.

Former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum told Perry, "This is big government run amok. It is bad policy, and it should not have been done."

And Minnesota Rep. Michele Bachmann, looking to siphon support from Perry's base of evangelical and tea party supporters, said: "To have innocent little 12-year-old girls be forced to have a government injection through an executive order is just flat out wrong." She also noted that that the company that makes the vaccine, Merck & Co., employed Mike Toomey, Perry's former chief of staff, as a lobbyist in Texas, and that the drug company had donated to Perry's campaigns.

Renewing the attack Tuesday, Bachmann said on NBC's "Today" show that "it's very clear that crony capitalism could likely have been the cause" of Perry's executive order.

The exchanges mirror the criticism Perry took in 2007.

DHS: New Airport Security Policy For Children Under 13

WASHINGTON (AP) — Children 12 years old and younger soon will no longer be required to remove their shoes at airport security checkpoints, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano told Congress on Tuesday. The policy also includes other ways to screen young children without resorting to a pat-down that involves touching private areas on the body.

The changes should be rolled out in the coming months, Napolitano said during a Senate hearing on the terror threat to the U.S.

Napolitano said there may be some exceptions. Terrorists have plotted to use children as suicide bombers, and some children still may be required to remove their shoes to keep security random.

"There will always be some unpredictability built into the system, and there will always be random checks even for groups that we are looking at differently, such as chil-

dren," she said.

Many travelers have complained that the TSA does not use common sense when it screens all air travelers the same way, including young children and the elderly. Criticism escalated last year when the government began using a pat-down more invasive than what had been used in the past, one that involves screeners feeling a traveler's genital and breast areas.

Earlier this year, TSA Administrator John Pistole instructed screeners to make every effort to screen young children without giving them the new pat-down. Pistole had called for a more aggressive pat-down when he took over the agency last year because he thought it gave screeners the best chance at stopping a suicide bomber like the one who nearly brought down an airliner over Detroit in 2009 with a bomb tucked in his pants.

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