

Briefly

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Iran tests long range missiles

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran said it successfully test-fired the longest-range missiles in its arsenal today, weapons capable of carrying a warhead and striking Israel, U.S. military bases in the Middle East, and parts of Europe.

State television said the powerful Revolutionary Guard, which controls Iran's missile program, successfully tested the medium-range Shahab-3 and Sajil missiles with can fly up to 1,200 miles (2,000 kilometers). It was the third round of missile tests in two days of drills by the Guard.

The Sajil-2 missile is Iran's most advanced two-stage surface-to-surface missile and is powered entirely by solid-fuel while the older Shahab-3 uses a combination of solid and liquid fuel in its most advanced form.

Solid fuel is seen as a technological breakthrough for any missile program as solid fuel increases the accuracy of missiles in reaching targets.

The war games come at a time when Iran is under intense international pressure to fully disclose its nuclear activities. They began Sunday, two days after the U.S. and its allies disclosed that Iran had been secretly developing an underground uranium enrichment facility and warned the country it must open the site to international inspection or face harsher international sanctions.

UN climate talks kick off in Bangkok

BANGKOK — U.N. climate talks kicked off today in Bangkok with leaders calling for delegates to break the deadlock over a global warming deal and warning failure to act would leave future generations fighting for survival.

Negotiations on a new U.N. climate pact have been bogged down by a broad unwillingness to commit to firm emissions targets, and a refusal by developing countries to sign a deal until the West guarantees tens of billions of dollars in financial assistance — something rich countries have so far refused to do.

"Time is not just pressing. It has almost run out," U.N. climate chief Yvo de Boer said, with a clock nearby showing there were 70 days until world leaders are scheduled to meet in Copenhagen to finalize a pact. "If we don't realize Plan A, the future will hold us to account," he said.

Some at the conference pointed to the tropical storm that tore through the Philippines over the weekend, leaving scores dead, as a glimpse into the kind of turbulent weather that could be unleashed by global warming.

France, Poland urge Swiss to free Polanski

ZURICH — The international tug-of-war over Roman Polanski escalated today as France and Poland urged Switzerland to free the 76-year-old director on bail and pressed U.S. officials all the way up to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on the case.

Polanski was in his third day of detention after Swiss police arrested him Saturday on an international warrant as he arrived in Zurich to receive a lifetime achievement award from a film festival.

A complicated legal process awaited all sides as the United States moved forward to secure his extradition for having sex in 1977 with a 13-year-old girl and fleeing to France a year later.

The Swiss Justice Ministry today did not rule out the possibility that Polanski, director of such classic films as "Chinatown" and "Rosemary's Baby," could be released on bail under very strict conditions that he doesn't flee Switzerland.

Justice spokesman Guido Balmer said such an arrangement is "not entirely excluded" under Swiss law and that Polanski could file a motion on bail.

Drug side effects harming children

CHICAGO — More than half a million U.S. children yearly have bad reactions or side effects from widely used medicines that require medical treatment and sometimes hospitalization, new research shows.

Children younger than age 5 are most commonly affected. Penicillin and other prescription antibiotics are among drugs causing the most problems, including rashes, stomachaches and diarrhea.

Parents should pay close attention when their children are started on medicines since "first-time medication exposures may reveal an allergic reaction," said lead author Dr. Florence Bourgeois, a pediatrician with Children's Hospital in Boston.

Doctors also should tell parents about possible symptoms for a new medication, she said.

The study appears in October's Pediatrics, released today.

People playing the odds on health care over costs

BY BETH FOUHY
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NEW YORK — Call it a health care gamble: the decision by some people to opt out of health insurance, paying cash for routine care while playing the odds that an accident or catastrophic illness won't plunge them into financial ruin.

President Barack Obama's goal of requiring everyone to carry health insurance has drawn a great deal of skepticism from this group. Many pay far less for health care than they would on premiums, and doubt that insurance would even cover them if they needed it.

It's unknown how many of the nearly 50 million uninsured in the United States voluntarily go without coverage. Researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation, which studies the uninsured, said

most are young, generally healthy adults who are self-employed or in relatively low-wage jobs that do not offer insurance coverage and don't pay enough for workers to afford individual policies.

"Income is key and most of the uninsured have low incomes," foundation researcher Karyn Schwartz said. "If you look at your budget and think you can't afford it or can afford it if you eat only ramen noodles, you may choose not to get it."

All the health care plans that have emerged from the Democratic-controlled Congress would require everyone to have insurance, the way drivers in nearly every state must purchase auto insurance. Proponents say that by bringing everyone into the system, medical risk is spread over a broader population, bringing costs down.

Those who opt out volun-

tarily might have to pay a penalty. Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., who drafted the Senate Finance Committee's plan, set the penalty at \$3,800 for a family but cut it to \$1,900 amid complaints that the original level was too high.

Republicans have called the insurance mandate a new tax on the middle class. Obama disputes that, saying that whatever plan emerges from Congress must offer subsidies to lower-income people that will make coverage affordable.

In exchange for the requirement that everyone buys coverage, Obama wants a guarantee from insurers that they no longer will deny coverage based on an individual's health or drop coverage when a person gets sick. The insurance industry has signaled it will accept that trade-off, but needs to convince skeptical consumers that it actually means it.

CUTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

posed elimination of Michigan's popular Promise college scholarship, cuts in health care for the poor and reduction of day care and other services for low-income residents.

Federal stimulus money will erase more than half the projected budget deficit. But lawmakers and the governor must agree on at least \$1.2 billion in spending cuts and tax increases to fill the rest of the gap.

Revenue sharing payments to local governments already have fallen \$500 million since 2001, a 33 percent reduction. State government has raided the payments to local communities to cover other programs as the state's general fund collections have dipped from more than \$9 billion in the 2007-08 fiscal year to about \$7 billion expected in the upcoming fiscal year.

The reduced revenue sharing comes on top of declining property tax revenues for local governments caused by Michigan's long, lingering recession.

"Absolutely, layoffs are imminent," Summer Minnick of the Michigan Municipal League said of the consequences. "We're well beyond capital improvements being delayed and other cuts."

A 13 percent reduction in revenue sharing would cost the city of Jackson roughly \$600,000, a significant hit to the city's \$24 million general fund budget. City Councilman Daniel Greer said 10 jobs may have to be cut, hopefully through attrition. The south central

WHERE THINGS STAND WITH MICHIGAN'S NEXT BUDGET

Michigan lawmakers have until the end of Wednesday to erase a projected \$2.8 billion shortfall and approve a balanced state budget. Here's a status update:

- The Michigan Legislature did not have session Sunday. But two conference committees met and passed budget bills with a 5 percent cut in prison spending and a 40 percent cut in state aid to local libraries.
- The full House and Senate are due back in Lansing on Tuesday.
- Unresolved issues that remain bottled up in a handful of six-member conference committees include cuts in mental health services, the Department of Human Services, state tax revenue-sharing payments for local police and fire

departments, and transportation funding.

• While a conference committee has voted to end Michigan's Promise college scholarship, the full Legislature has not voted on the plan. Just four of 15 budget bills have been approved by both the House and Senate.

• Legislative leaders have agreed to cut spending by nearly \$1.3 billion, with the rest of the deficit made up by federal stimulus money. Gov. Jennifer Granholm and others say some cuts are too deep, and rank-and-file lawmakers have yet to vote on many controversial cuts.

• The Democratic-led House could try to pass tax increases this week to lessen some potential cuts.

Michigan city of 33,500 already has cut its employees from about 350 more than a decade ago to 287.

City employees may be asked to take 12 unpaid furlough days — one for each month — or go to four-day, 10-hour work weeks.

Jackson has cut back on curbside leaf pickups. The city's general fund also pays for parks and recreation, cemeteries, the assessor's office, finance department, clerk and treasurer's office.

"These are vital services that people need and use every day," Greer said.

"It's not that we're not willing to suck it up," he said. "But we've been sucking it up for a long time now. We've got the city operating as lean and mean as we can."

Many local governments are getting help for law enforcement, sewer, road and housing projects through the federal stimulus package. But government officials say the Recovery Act cash doesn't offset the lost revenue sharing because the federal cash

is typically targeted for specific programs with very little spending flexibility. State revenue sharing, on the other hand, can be used to fill gaps that spring up in just about any budget.

Several local government officials have called on Granholm to veto part of the state budget if it includes deep revenue sharing cuts.

Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero, in a statement released by the Michigan Municipal League, called the projected funding cuts an "unconscionable failure of leadership" on the part of state lawmakers.

"Instead of making the tough decisions necessary to get Michigan's financial house in order, they are simply passing the buck to cities, counties and townships across the state," Bernero, a former state lawmaker, said in the statement. "The state budget crisis didn't just appear out of nowhere. It is a problem they have ignored and papered over with quick fixes for far too long."

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FUNERAL NOTICES

TUESDAY
Audrey King — 1 p.m., Brown-Teman Christiansen Funeral Home and Cremation Center, Greenville.

WEDNESDAY
Annette Gerou — 11 a.m., Heckman Funeral Home, Howard City.

Kenneth VanDerWarf — 1 p.m., Marshall Funeral Home, Greenville.

BARBARA ANN COLLINS, 63 GREENVILLE — Barbara Ann Collins, 63, of Wyoming, died Thursday at Metro Health Hospital. In keeping with her wishes, cremation has taken place and no services will be held. (Brown-Teman & Christiansen Funeral Home

and Cremation Center, Greenville)

ANNETTE GEROU, 45 HOWARD CITY — Annette Gerou, 45, of Westland, formerly of Howard City, died Thursday at Karmonos Cancer Center. Funeral services will be 11 a.m. Wednesday at the Heckman Funeral Home, Howard City.

KENNETH L. VANDERWARF, 69 GREENVILLE — Kenneth L. VanDerWarf, 69, of Greenville, died Saturday at his home. Memorial services will be 1 p.m. Wednesday at the Marshall Funeral Home, Greenville.

Obituaries on Page 8

Homeless sex offenders directed to the woods

BY GREG BLUESTEIN
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MARIETTA, Ga. — A small group of homeless sex offenders have set up camp in a densely wooded area behind a suburban Atlanta office park, directed there by probation officers who say it's a place of last resort for those with nowhere else to go.

The nine sex offenders live in tents surrounding a makeshift fire pit in the trees behind a towering "no trespassing" sign, waiting out their probation sentences as they face numerous living restrictions under one of the nation's toughest sex offender policies.

"It's kind of like a mind-game, it's like 'Survivor,'" said

William Hawkins, a 34-year-old who said he was directed to the campsite two weeks ago after being released from prison for violating probation for failing to register as a sex offender in Georgia.

The muddy camp on the outskirts of prosperous Cobb County is an unintended consequence of Georgia's sex offender law, which bans the state's 16,000 sex offenders from living, working or loitering within 1,000 feet of schools, churches, parks and other spots where children gather.

It's not the only place in Cobb County where offenders can live — there are hundreds of other sex offenders throughout the county living in compliance with the law.

TOUR

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Klackle said there were some injuries due to the weather. One local resident slipped on one of the wooden boardwalks along the trail and fractured his scapula.

"But I've had a lot of positive feedback from the racers," Klackle said. "They really enjoyed the novelty of the event and liked the scenic route through Greenville."

He said he plans to host the event again next year.

"The course had a lot of everything — roads, trails," Fournier said. "It was challenging. It was a little slippery and scary on those corners. But it was a lot of fun."

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Peter Beels of Grand Rapids runs to the second doughnut-eating pit-stop to make up for lost time spent repairing his bike. Beels was one of a few participants to suffer a flat tire during the race.

EDMORE

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great council. We had a lot of people in Edmore help out on these projects. It wasn't me. I just happened to help out a little bit here and there."

"Paul made a huge impact in the area as far as getting us set up with our water treatment plant, settling Hitachi, making some huge steps forward for the village of Edmore," Village President Lon Leonard added.

The Edmore Village Council recently voted 4 to 2 to hire Schuitema as the new village manager. Schuitema was the only person to apply for the job, despite the village's advertising effort.

Leonard and council members Jamie Ballard,

Bonnie Ashbaugh and Bonnie Davis voted "yes," while council members Karen Deja and Mary Ann Nye voted "no." Jim Metzger has since replaced Schuitema on the council.

"Art has an exceptional resume," Leonard said. "I'm sure he's going to do a great job for us."

Schuitema is a Korean War veteran and is retired from working in the military aviation field. He will receive a salary of \$28,500 during his one-year contract with the village.

"I'm extremely excited," Schuitema said. "I feel I have a lot of knowledge. Paul has been extremely helpful in communicating with me and helping me with this transition."

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF EDMORE VILLAGE MANAGERS

- Paul Kluwe served as village manager from July 2005 to this week. He is resigning to take a position in the automotive industry in Paris, Tenn.
- Heath Kaplan who was village manager from June to October 2004. When Kaplan was on the job in Edmore, conflict broke out among the council, causing the treasurer and three council members to resign. Those who left all cited "new leadership" as the reason for their departures. Kaplan went on to work in Capax and Wayland before taking a city manager job in Crandall, Texas, in July 2008.

- Chris Wilson served as village manager from July 2003 to February 2004. An Arkansas native, Wilson left Edmore to become the city manager in Algonac. He became village manager of Beverly Hills, Mich., in January.
- Eric Dodson served as village manager from October 1996 to December 2001, when he left to become an attorney with the office of Ryan Villet in Stanton. He was hired as city manager of St. Ignace in December 2005.
- David Arking served as village manager from September 1992 to August 1996. He left to become the village manager of Middleville.

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