

THE NATION

Sotomayor breaks ankle

WASHINGTON (AP) — Supreme Court nominee Sonia Sotomayor broke her ankle Monday morning in an airport stumble, then boarded her flight as scheduled and made the roughly hourlong trip to Washington to meet with senators who will vote on her confirmation.

The federal judge, who has been keeping up a busy set of appointments on Capitol Hill, tripped at New York's LaGuardia Airport and suffered a small fracture to her right ankle, the White House said.

THE WORLD



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brazil's Navy recovers debris from the missing Air France jet from the Atlantic Ocean Monday.

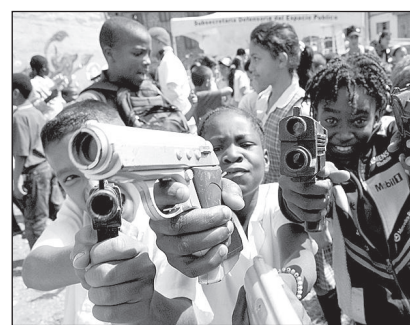
Search on for black box

RECIFE, Brazil (AP) — Brazilian searchers found a large tail section from an Air France jet Monday, one of the biggest pieces yet recovered from wreckage that could help narrow the search for Flight 447's black boxes. A U.S. Navy team is bringing in high-tech underwater listening devices to detect pings from the data and voice recorders.

Brazilian and French military ships that have so far recovered 16 bodies and large amounts of plane wreckage searched amid a sea of floating debris, finding the tail section with Air France's trademark red and blue stripes. All the wreckage has been found bobbing in the Atlantic Ocean; the Brazilians don't have the means of locating underwater debris.

Brazilian military officials reduced the number of recovered bodies from the 17 announced Sunday, saying there had been a counting error.

GUNS FOR FOOD



LUIS BENAVIDES/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Children point plastic guns during a disarmament campaign in Medellin, Colombia on Monday. Police exchanged children's plastic toy guns for food as part of a campaign to diminish the use of toy weapons.

Weapons sales skyrocket

STOCKHOLM (AP) — World governments spent a record \$1.46 trillion on upgrading their armed forces last year despite the economic downturn, with China climbing to second place behind top military spender the United States, a Swedish research group said Monday. Global military spending was 4 percent higher than in 2007 and up 45 percent from a decade ago, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, or SIPRI, said in its annual report.

"So far the global arms industry, booming from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and from spending increases by many developing countries, has shown few signs of suffering from the crisis," SIPRI said.

Bus bombed in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AP) — A bomb tore through a minibus during morning rush hour Monday in a mainly Shiite area in Baghdad, killing at least nine people and wounding 24, Iraqi officials said.

The blast was a grim reminder of the major challenge facing Iraqi forces three weeks ahead of the June 30 deadline for U.S. troops to withdraw from urban areas.

The bomb was attached to the minibus in the southern area of Abu Dshir, a Shiite enclave in the mainly Sunni neighborhood of Dora, police said.

Nasrallah accepts loss

BLOOMBERG — Hezbollah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah said he accepted the results of elections in Lebanon in which an alliance led by his Iranian-backed Shiite group failed to oust a pro-Western coalition.

Nasrallah, who spoke on Hezbollah's Al-Manar television, congratulated all the winners from both sides and said he accepted the results with sportsmanship and democratic spirit.

DECEPTIVELY QUIET ON GAZA BORDER



ARIEL SCHALIT/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Israeli soldiers sit atop tank in its position along the border with the Gaza Strip on Monday. Israeli troops battled Palestinian gunmen early Monday in a flare-up of violence along the tense frontier between Israel and Hamas-controlled Gaza. A group of around 10 gunmen were trying to cross the border fence into Israel on horses loaded with explosives when they were spotted and destroyed by troops, according to Palestinian security officials.

7,000 Marines patrol Afghan's parched desert

CAMP LEATHERHEAD, Afghanistan (AP) — Some 7,000 new U.S. troops ordered to Afghanistan by President Barack Obama are fanning out across the country's dangerous south on a mission to defeat an increasingly violent Taliban insurgency.

The Marines represent the first wave of 21,000 troops ordered to Afghanistan.

Marine spokesman 1st Lt. Abe Sipe says 7,000 troops from the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade are now in the country. The brigade is based at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. The Marines represent the first wave of 21,000 troops ordered to Afghanistan this summer. Most of the buildup will take place in Helmand and Kandahar.

The two southern provinces lie at the heart of the insurgency, close to the border with Pakistan, where the Taliban's top leadership is believed to be based.

Supreme Court has busy day

WASHINGTON (AP) — On Monday, the Supreme Court:

- Ruled that judges must step aside from cases when large campaign contributions from interested parties create the appearance of bias. The high court on a 5-4 vote sent back to the West Virginia Supreme Court a case where a judge remained involved in a lawsuit filed against the company of the most generous supporter of his election.
- Ruled that the current government in Iraq would be held responsible for the actions of Saddam Hussein's regime.
- Turned down a challenge to the Pentagon policy forbidding gays and lesbians from serving openly in the military.
- Agreed to find a way to determine where a company's principal place of business is located.
- Turned down an appeal from Indian tribes who wanted to block expansion of a ski resort on a mountain they consider sacred.
- Refused to hear an appeal from two former top executives of Tyco International that challenges their convictions for fraud and larceny involving more than \$100 million in bonuses.
- Refused to hear a Marine's lawsuit blaming the government's dumping of toxic chemicals at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina for his son's illnesses.
- Will not consider making changes to the sentence of a radical environmentalist linked to multiple arsons across the West.
- Won't get involved in an argument over an Illinois state law that forces casinos to transfer millions of dollars to ailing horse tracks. Last year, the Illinois Supreme Court unanimously upheld the law.
- Upheld the racketeering conviction of a reputed associate of the Gambino crime family, Edmund Boyle.
- Won't stop Pennsylvania officials from prosecuting a man whose computer was found to contain child pornography while it was at Circuit City being upgraded.
- Will decide whether a new bankruptcy law applies to lawyers, and if it does, whether their free speech rights are violated by the law's ban on people being told to incur more debt before filing bankruptcy.

Outrage follows jailings

2 U.S. women get hard labor

By William Foreman and Matthew Lee
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEOUL, South Korea — The sentencing of two American journalists to 12 years' hard labor in North Korea on Monday sets the stage for possible negotiations with the reclusive nation for their release — perhaps involving an envoy from the U.S.

New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, who helped win the release of Americans from North Korea in the 1990s, said he was "ready to do anything" the Obama administration asked. Another possible negotiator, if the U.S. government approved, is former Vice President Al Gore, who founded the TV venture that both reporters work for.

A senior Obama administration official said Richardson and Gore had both been in contact with the White House and State Department about potential next steps, including possibly sending an envoy to try to negotiate the release of Euna Lee, 26, and Laura Ling, 32, both of whom work for Gore's Current TV. But the official stressed that no decisions had been made on how to proceed and said neither Gore nor Richardson had been asked to go.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity due to the diplomatic sensitivity of the situation. The isolated regime is probably less interested in having the women sent to its gulag, where poorly fed inmates often do back-breaking work in factories, coal mines and rice paddies.

Instead, Pyongyang will like-



AHN YOUNG-JOON/ASSOCIATED PRESS

South Koreans watch a TV broadcasting news about two American journalists detained in North Korea at the Seoul Railway Station, in South Korea on Monday. North Korea's top court convicted the journalists and sentenced them to 12 years in a prison Monday, intensifying the reclusive nation's confrontation with the United States.

ly try to use them as bargaining chips in an increasingly tense standoff with the U.S. over the North's recent nuclear and missile tests.

President Barack Obama "is deeply concerned by the reported sentencing of the two American citizen journalists by North Korean authorities, and we are engaged through all possible channels to secure their release," said deputy White House spokesman William Burton.

Richardson said the journalists were part of a "high-stakes poker game" North Korea is playing, and now that the legal process has been completed, he thinks talks for their release can begin, with some kind of a political pardon as a goal.

"In previous instances where I was involved in negotiating, you could not get this started until the legal process had ended," he said on NBC's "Today" show.

U.S. journalists get 12 years jail

North Korean top court convicted two U.S. journalists Monday, sentencing them to 12 years in labor prison.



SOURCE: ESRI AP

GOP warns Obama on health care

By Ricardo Alonso-Zaldívar
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama is making a mistake on health care by insisting on a government insurance option for the middle class, influential Republicans said in a letter to the White House released Monday.



OBAMA

It could cost him chances for broad support across the political divide, the nine lawmakers, all members of the Senate Finance Committee, warned.

Leaders of the Finance panel, which has the best odds of producing a bipartisan bill, are working against a self-imposed deadline for moving the legislation through committee this month.

But tensions have been rising since Obama recently affirmed his strong support for including the option of a public insurance plan.

"At a time when major government programs like Medi-

care and Medicaid are already on a path to fiscal insolvency, creating a brand new government program will not only worsen our long-term financial outlook but also negatively impact American families who enjoy the private coverage of their choice," said the letter, signed by all but one of the Finance Republicans.

Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, said Democrats would live to regret it if they insist on a public plan.

"Democrats know that if they go to a totally partisan approach like the president has suggested they're going to eat that the rest of their lives," said Hatch, who circulated the letter to Obama.

"I'll be glad to help them, but not with a public plan," Hatch, referring to the Democrats, told Fox News.

Obama says his plan would allow Americans to keep private coverage. But many Republicans say that once a government insurance program is created, it will eventually dominate the market, and drive private insurers out of business.

Most Democrats support cre-

ating a public plan to compete with private insurers, but even they are divided over critical details. In the House, a rift has opened between conservative and liberal Democrats over a government plan.

The one Finance Republican who did not sign the letter was Sen. Olympia Snowe of Maine. Snowe has been trying to find a compromise through which a government plan would be available as a last resort, if health insurance remains unaffordable for many families even after Congress overhauls the system.

About two-thirds of Americans now have private insurance coverage, the vast majority through job-based plans. But there is one government health program that enjoys widespread political support.

Medicare, created for seniors more than 40 years ago, has defied the predictions of critics that it would usher in an era of socialized medicine.

Though the government controls every aspect of the plan, Medicare recipients still enjoy a wide choice of doctors and hospitals.