

BRIEF
STATE

INDIANAPOLIS

Lawmakers have no plans to discuss casino money

State lawmakers are showing no renewed interest in taking local tax revenue generated by casinos to either bolster the state's check-book or help other local governments pay their bills.

The Senate passed legislation last year that would have diverted \$75 million in local casino revenue to help balance the state budget, but the idea was rejected by the House.

Republican Rep. Jeff Espich of Uniondale, chairman of the tax-and-budget-writing House Ways and Means Committee, said earlier that he did not expect lawmakers to discuss it.

Still, officials in some riverboat counties took steps in between sessions to discourage criticism about the revenue they receive from casinos.

Lawrenceburg, home of the Argosy Casino, initiated a \$10 million annual plan to start sharing its substantial casino revenue through economic development grants to surrounding counties. The city plans to give \$500,000 annually to nearby Franklin County.

"We had to do it," Rep. Bob Bischoff, D-Lawrenceburg, told The Courier-Journal of Louisville, Ky. "What it does is bring in support from other legislators in southeast Indiana to protect the riverboat revenue."

BRIEF
NATION

MCALLEN, Texas

Hurricane evacuee bus owner pleads not guilty

The owner of a tour company whose bus exploded and killed 23 nursing home residents as they fled Hurricane Rita pleaded not guilty Monday to conspiracy and safety violations.

Global Limo Inc. and its president and director, James H. Maples, 65, are accused in a three-count federal indictment of conspiring to falsify driver time records and failing to inspect buses to ensure their safety.

Maples, 65, didn't comment as he left the courtroom. He was arrested Wednesday and released on a \$75,000 bond.

The bus erupted into flames Sept. 23 on a freeway near Dallas while carrying evacuees from a Houston nursing home as Rita gathered strength in the Gulf of Mexico. The driver and some passengers escaped, but others were caught inside as patients' oxygen tanks exploded.

The conspiracy charge, the most serious, carries up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. If the company is convicted on that charge, it could be fined \$500,000.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Dorina Ramos scheduled jury selection for early April.

BRIEF
WORLD

TEHRAN, Iran

Protesters killed as fight over drawings continues

Hundreds of angry protesters hurled stones and fire bombs at the Danish Embassy in the Iranian capital Monday to protest publication of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad.

It was the second attack on a Western mission in Tehran on Monday. Earlier in the day, 200 student demonstrators threw stones at the Austrian Embassy, breaking windows and starting small fires. The mission was targeted because Austria holds the presidency of the European Union.

Thousands more people joined violent demonstrations across the world to protest publication of the caricatures of Muhammad, and the Bush administration appealed to Saudi Arabia to use its influence among Arabs to help ease tensions in the Middle East and Europe.

Afghan troops shot and killed four protesters, some as they tried to storm a U.S. military base outside Bagram, the first time a protest over the issue has targeted the United States. A teenage boy was killed when protesters stampeded in Somalia.

Attorney general defends eavesdropping

Gonzales calls program lawful

By KATHERINE SHRADER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON

Senators raised doubts about the legal rationale for the Bush administration's eavesdropping program Monday, forcing Attorney General Alberto Gonzales to provide a lengthy defense of the operations he called a vital early-warning system for terrorists.

A handful of Republicans joined Democrats in raising questions about whether President Bush went too far in ordering the National Security Agency's monitoring operations. The senators were particularly troubled by the administration's argument that a September 2001 congressional resolution approving use of military force covered the surveillance of some domestic communications.

"The president does not have a



Attorney General Alberto Gonzales defended President Bush's domestic surveillance program on Capitol Hill Monday before the Senate Judiciary Committee headed by Arlen Specter, R-Pa.

blank check," said Judiciary Chairman Arlen Specter, R-Pa., who wants the administration to ask the secretive Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court to review the program.

"You think you're right, but there are a lot of people who think you're wrong," Specter told Gonzales. "What do you have to

lose if you're right?"

Under Bush's orders, the ultra-secret National Security Agency has been eavesdropping, without warrants, on international communications of people in the United States whose calls and e-mails may be linked to Muslim extremists.

During the daylong committee

hearing, Gonzales and the senators reached as far back as eavesdropping ordered by President Washington and delved into court decisions surrounding presidential powers and the 1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

Gonzales repeatedly defended the current program as lawful, reasonable and essential to nation-

al security. He said the president's authority was strongest in a time of war, and he called the monitoring operations an early-warning system designed for the 21st century.

Democrats pressed Gonzales for details about the program and other similar operations, almost all of which he would not provide. They've asked Specter to file subpoenas for classified legal opinions on the subject.

"The president and the Justice Department have a constitutional duty to faithfully execute the laws," said Vermont Sen. Patrick Leahy, the committee's top Democrat. "Nobody is above the law, not even the president of the United States."

Republicans, too, were skeptical. Sen. Mike DeWine, R-Ohio, said Bush's power, and the country, would be stronger if he came to Congress for statutory authorization.

Specter said the committee would conduct at least two more hearings, which could include Gonzales. Specter has also invited former Attorney General John Ashcroft to testify.

Start of Muslim festival marred by day of violence

By SINAN SALAHEDDIN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD, Iraq

Gunmen and roadside bombs killed at least 11 people across Iraq on Monday, while police found the bullet-riddled bodies of two men in the capital, the latest victims of sectarian killings.

In southern Baghdad, police found the bodies of two brothers seized from their home late Sunday by men claiming to be Interior Ministry commandos, said Lt. Maitham Abdul-Razzaq.

The two brothers, both Sunni Arabs, were shot repeatedly and found with their hands and legs bound.

Sunni Arabs accuse Shiite-backed security forces and militias of targeting their community in a campaign of sectarian kill-



Shiite Muslim children holding candles gather to mark the Muslim festival of Ashoura outside the Imam Hussein Shrine on Monday in the holy city of Karbala, south of Baghdad, Iraq.

ings. Sunni politicians over the weekend warned of civil war after the bullet-riddled bodies of 14 Sunni Arab men were found in Baghdad.

Sectarian tensions are high

ahead of the feast of Ashoura this week, which marks the seventh century death in battle of the revered Shiite saint Imam Hussein, grandson of Islam's Prophet Muhammad.

Moussaoui tossed from courtroom as jury selection begins for sentencing

By MATTHEW BARAKAT
AND MICHAEL J. SNIFFEN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALEXANDRIA, Va.

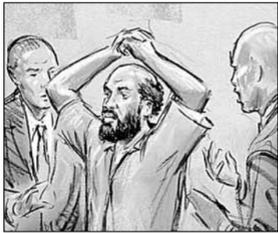
Proclaiming "I am al-Qaida," terrorist conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui disrupted the opening of his sentencing trial Monday and was tossed out of court as selection began for the jurors who will decide whether he lives or dies.

He disavowed his lawyers and pledged to testify on his own behalf in the trial that is to begin March 6.

An often volatile figure in his proceedings, Moussaoui was removed from the courtroom four separate times.

"This trial is a circus," he declared. "I want to be heard." Of his lawyers, he said: "These people do not represent me."

After jury selection, expected to take a month, a penalty trial will determine whether the 37-year-old Frenchman of Moroccan descent, the only person in the U.S. charged in the Sept. 11, terrorist attacks, will be put to death or sentenced to life in prison.



This artist's rendering shows Zacarias Moussaoui, center, gesturing during jury selection in his terrorist conspiracy trial on Monday in Alexandria, Va.

He pleaded guilty in April to conspiring to fly planes into U.S. buildings but claims he had no role in the Sept. 11 plot.

The potential jurors — most of them white, from their 20s through their 50s or 60s — showed no reaction to his interruptions.

Twice Moussaoui declared his allegiance to Osama bin Laden's terrorist network.

"I will take the stand to tell the whole truth about my involvement," he said. "I am al-Qaida. (His lawyers) are Americans. I'll have nothing to do with them."

Sunni extremists have targeted the past two Ashoura festivals. Eight suicide bombers killed 55 Shiites last year.

In 2004, at least 181 people died in bombings at Shiite shrines in Baghdad and Karbala.

Ashoura-related violence has already begun this year.

In Basra, police killed a man who fired a machine gun at a group of Shiites performing Ashoura ceremonies and threw a hand grenade at police forces, said Capt. Mushtaq Khadim.

Two civilians and two policemen were wounded during the clash.

An Iraqi soldier killed a member of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi militia, which was guarding a group of Shiites taking part in an Ashoura procession in northwestern Bag-

dad's Shula neighborhood, said police Capt. Qassim Hussein.

It was unclear what sparked the incident.

Elsewhere, an Iraqi policeman was killed and his brother, also a policeman, was wounded in an attack by armed men firing from a speeding car in the northern city of Kirkuk, said police Capt. Firhad Talabani.

In other violence around the country, gunmen killed an Iraqi working as an interpreter for British troops based in Basra, police said.

Drive-by gunmen killed a retired, 60-year-old teacher and wounded his son in southern Baghdad, while a grocer, car dealer, former military intelligence official and a bystander were killed in three separate attacks in the capital's western suburbs.

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www.cedarlanefamilydentistry.com

A VITAMIN FOR HEALTHY GUMS?

Recent research indicates that people with higher levels of Vitamin D may be less likely to develop gum disease. When researchers analyzed data from a U.S. health survey, they found that teenagers and adults with the highest blood levels of vitamin D were 20 percent less likely than those with the lowest levels to show signs of gingivitis (a milder form of gum disease characterized by swollen, bleeding gums). As of now, scientists can only say that there is an association between vitamin D consumption and healthier gums, not that vitamin D necessarily is responsible. Still, it is a good bet that the vitamin known for healthy bones and a healthy immune system might also fight inflammation.

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