

Ryan Express speeds past 300th win
 Rangers' ace breaks pitching milestone in victory.
 See Page 5

Extremists release hostage; 40 others remain imprisoned

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad (AP) — Moslem radicals freed Prime Minister Arthur N.R. Robinson on Tuesday, four days after they took him and 40 other people hostage in a coup attempt, the attorney general said.

The other hostages, including 15 Cabinet members, were still held, Attorney General Anthony Smart said on state radio. He refused to say what conditions led to Robinson's release.

Prior to Smart's announcement, there were a series of reports about a possible deal between the government and the Moslem radicals, led by former policeman Abu Bakr.

Bakr said Robinson had agreed to step down and that elections for a new government would be held within 90 days.

Robinson announced the same deal Monday night during a telephone call to journalists from inside Parliament. He also said he had agreed to grant his captors amnesty, and denied being coerced into making the deal.

Robinson left the Parliament building at 2:20 p.m., according to Smart. "He is in good spirits," he said. "We continue to pray for the safe return of the rest of the hostages."

Robinson and the others were seized Friday by extremists who accused him of corruption and demanded he resign. Robinson suffered gunshot wounds to both feet in the takeover, and nine people were killed. His condition Tuesday was not immediately known.

Earlier, Bakr said Robinson needed medical care for glaucoma. He claimed the prime minister was going blind because of a lack of medication. It was not known if Robinson had a history of glaucoma.

Selwyn Richardson, the justice and national security minister, spoke to a local journalist by telephone from inside Parliament on Tuesday. He also said the government had granted amnesty to Bakr and his followers and that the agreement was contingent "upon the safe return of all members of Parliament" held hostage.

However, the program manager of government-run television, Bernard Pantin, said no formal deal was signed, and he doubted an agreement had been reached.

Asked why he was skeptical, Pantin said: "All I know is the prime minister is a hostage." Pantin spoke by telephone from the army base.

A government spokesman, Gary Shaw, also denied a deal was made. Asked about the statement from Robinson, Shaw said: "These are statements of people being held at gunpoint. People are made to make statements."

There were 25 hostages inside the government television station.

Renovation plans limit field's use



By MIKE LUMAN
Of The Battalion Staff

Battalion File Photo
In the past, teams like the lacrosse squad have held scrimmages at Simpson Drill Field. The field is now on restricted-use status to sports activities because of its renovation plans.

Texas A&M officials said renovation of the Simpson Drill Field is likely, a move that when completed could hinder sports clubs but would allow Corps of Cadets activity to continue.

The field, located near the MSC, was placed on restricted-use status to sports clubs this summer in anticipation of the planned project.

Robert Smith, vice president of Finance and Administration, said renovation of the field was an "excellent probability," but no date had been set.

"The timing of when it begins will depend entirely on funding," Smith said. "We hope for private donations."

Dr. John Koldus, vice president of Student Services, said since no work presently was being done, restricted use of the field for sports organizations would be temporarily lifted.

University President William H. Mobley recently organized a committee to look into the creation of a "nicer" drill field with the possibility of a park area or statues, Koldus said.

It would still be used as a parade ground for Corps reviews, he said.

Smith said the field was an eyesore, and the renovation would include new soil and grass.

"It's a complete renovation of the existing turf area, a significant upgrade," he said.

Smith said 14,000 yards of topsoil, a new irrigation system and the same type of grass as Olsen Field would be added.

Statues might be added to part of the field, but no final decision has been made, he said.

He said sports groups might not be excluded entirely from the field after renovation.

"Obviously, you can't have a mud football game," he said.

Paula Opal, assistant director of the Department of Recreation Sports, said the project is frustrating because there are no plans in writing.

"We should benefit, though," she said. "The University is good about replacing space they re-dedicate the usage of."

She said the loss of green space which is open to all students was disappointing, but the probability of the department getting a sports club center was high.

Vickie Running, secretary of the Board of Regents, said the Board had not received or discussed plans for the renovation.

She added the regents adopted a resolution in 1985 to maintain the status of Simpson Field as a drill field.

"It was to be used as a parade ground or drill field in its current status, to be an open grass-covered area available to the Corps for drills and ceremonies and as a site for recreational and leisure activities," the resolution reads.

Gene therapy receives 'historic' NIH approval

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal panel approved, for the first time Tuesday, the treatment of human disease using gene therapy, the process of inserting curative genes into human cells.

The Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee, a panel of the National Institutes of Health, gave its approval to using gene therapy to treat a lethal form of skin cancer and an inherited disorder that deprives children of an immune system.

Approval by a committee of the Food and Drug Administration is still required before the gene therapy can begin on patients, but the NIH vote was considered the most crucial one by experts in the field.

Gerard J. McGarrity, chairman of the NIH panel, called the approval "historic."

"What we're doing today is adding gene therapy to vaccines, antibiotics and radiation in the medical arsenal," McGarrity said. "Medicine has been waiting thousands of years for this."

But Dr. Steven Rosenberg, an NIH researcher who has been experimenting in the laboratory with gene therapy for more than a decade, cautioned that the treatment "will only be important if it works. This puts us a step closer."

Rosenberg and Dr. W. French Anderson, another NIH researcher, said they have patients, some dying of malignant melanoma,

who could be used in the experimental therapy.

If successful, Anderson said, the gene therapy would be "the first step in what probably will be a revolution in medicine over the next two years."

Rosenberg said researchers should know within six months after the treatments start whether or not the gene therapy works.

Both Rosenberg and Anderson said they expect FDA approval of their proposals soon, and that they will start treating patients with this fall.

The committee's action, along with approval by the FDA, will allow two groups of NIH doctors to start treating patients with cells that have been altered by the insertion of new genes.

Genes that are, in effect, instructions to a cell will cause the treated cells to produce special proteins that will either amplify a biological action or replace proteins that were missing.

Rosenberg, who proposed the anti-cancer therapy, said he plans to alter the genetic make up of a blood cell called the tumor-infiltrating lymphocyte.

This cell, called TIL, will normally seek out and attack a cancerous tumor, but it is not strong enough by itself to control the tumor.

Candidate calls for harsher laws for offenders

Candidate for state representative Jim James unveiled his plans Tuesday to toughen Texas laws, including a proposal to double the time violent offenders must serve before they are eligible for parole.

James, a Democrat, is opposing Republican Steve Ogden for the District 14 seat, which includes all Brazos County.

James outlined his five-point plan Tuesday in the Brazos County courthouse annex.

Violent criminals are eligible for parole after serving one-fourth of their sentence in Texas, but James said he will propose doubling that time if he is elected.

"Overcrowding in Texas prisons can no longer be an excuse for the early release of violent criminals," he said.

James, a former prosecutor and assistant district attorney, said the prison system can hold violent offenders longer since 17,000 beds will be added statewide in the coming years.

He also said the state can save money by putting non-violent criminals in minimum security prisons and freeing up space in maximum security prisons for violent criminals.

James also said he would propose making a drug-related murder a capital offense, which is punishable by the death penalty. He said the law would protect undercover officers better as well as provide a stronger deterrent to drug-related killing.

Another point James made was to allow the introduction of oral confessions as admissible evidence. Under the present law, a confession to a police officer may not be admissible, but a confession to a fellow inmate is admissible.

"This punishes honest police officers," he said. "If the officer says the suspect confessed in 'spontaneous utterance,' it's OK. But if the criminal confesses in response to a question, it's not admissible. That's ridiculous."

James continued his outline by saying that juveniles who commit serious crimes should be sent to prison and proposed adding aggravated robbery to the state's list of serious juvenile crimes.

Texas' Determinate Sentencing Act specifies certain crimes for which a juvenile can be sentenced to prison, but aggravated robbery presently is not one.

The candidate also said he wants to see insurance coverage extended to police officers who retire after serving 10 or more years.

He cited retired Bryan police officer Delmo Jasper, who he said has no insurance and just underwent open heart surgery.

James said Jasper's insurance policy was good for 18 months after he retired, but did not cover him after that.

"There are hundreds of Delmo Jaspers struggling across Texas," he said. "They dedicated their lives to protecting us. They were there when we needed them. And I think we need to take better care of them when they need it."

Environmentalists predict oil spill to be 'worst case scenario'

GALVESTON (AP) — A 500,000-gallon oil spill into Galveston Bay has already killed two sea birds and could be the "worst case scenario" environmentalists feared, a state official said Tuesday.

The oil spilled Saturday after a tanker collided with two barges in the Houston Ship Channel. By Tuesday, a slick covering 17 miles had formed and oil washed up on the Texas City Dike and two peninsulas, the Coast Guard said.

Galveston Bay is protected from the Gulf of Mexico by barrier islands which contain delicate nesting grounds for birds and other wildlife.

"The worst kind of spill you can have is one behind these barrier islands, which is what we've got," Larry McKinney, director of resource protection for the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife, said. He predicted the spill would rank as

Microbes spur debate/Page 3
 Hance proposes spill legislation/Page 3
 Valdez investigation continues/Page 6

The deaths of two seabirds were attributed to the spill, as workers began cleaning up the crude on the dike and at Port Bolivar and Pelican Island. No other wildlife deaths were reported as of Tuesday afternoon, McKinney said.

Coast Guard Rear Adm. Jim Loy, who flew in from New Orleans to survey the spill, said a flyover of the area convinced him the situation was

under control.

"It's a very manageable situation, perhaps not being managed as well as it could be," Loy said. "I saw streaks of black oil that should have been addressed that weren't being addressed at Eagle Point."

Eagle Point is a residential area with private bulkheads. Heavy black oil was reported on the sandy beaches Tuesday morning.

French professor initiates exchange program talks

By ELIZABETH TISCH
Of The Battalion Staff

Directors from Texas A&M's Center of International Business Studies and a French business school are negotiating a faculty and graduate student exchange program which would start next June.

Henri Heugel, an A&M visiting professor from France, is the director of International Relations from the French business school Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Dijon.

Heugel was on campus for three weeks teaching a special topics course on international business.

During his stay at the University, Heugel met with A&M President William H. Mobley and Dr. Kerry Cooper, director of the Center for International Business Studies.

"During Henri's visit last year, he proposed we initiate a faculty-student exchange program," Cooper said. "We are working on an agreement by which students from Dijon would come here and our students would go to the graduate business school in Dijon for a semester or more."

"I don't know how frequently we

Orange hydrants on campus confuse 'curious individuals'

By JAMES M. LOVE
Of The Battalion Staff

It would seem that Aggeland would be the last place in the world to have a fire hydrant painted orange.

But, lo and behold, there are at least three on campus.

At least one Texas A&M student has noticed the rival's — the University of Texas' — burnt orange trademark, and called BATTIPS, The Battalion's phone line for story ideas.

Frank Harmier, a graduate student of education administration, was confused by the color scheme.

"I'm walking along near Sbis, and from out of nowhere jumps this orange-topped fire hydrant," he said. "All the other ones have green tops and this one is orange. I'm a curious individual, and I had to ask myself, 'Should we have an orange fire hydrant at A&M?'"

At least two other hydrants on campus are partially painted orange. One is in front of J.R. Thompson Hall, and the other, which is solid orange, is in front of the Royce E. Wisenbaker Building.

Ira Beavers, Building and Equipment inspector, said the fire hydrants are painted according to a national fire code.

"The different colors signal the different pressures under the hydrant to the firefighters," he said. Green means high pressure, orange is medium and red is low.

Harry Stiteler, director of A&M's Safety and Health Department, said there is a color code, but there's no requirement the hydrants be painted any certain way.

"We usually substitute orange for yellow," he said, "but whomever did the painting must not have been informed."

Joe Sugg, director of the Physical Plant, said he's been aware of the inappropriate orange color and decided Monday to start a program to repaint the hydrants maroon.

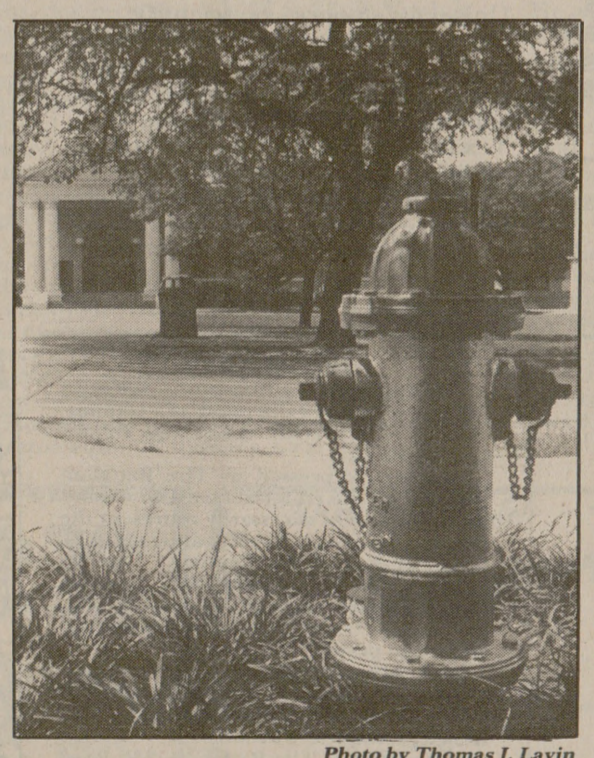


Photo by Thomas J. Lavin
The suspect - an orange hydrant

"My decision is that we will paint several different combinations of maroon and white or silver on some of the hydrants on Agronomy Road," he said. "We'll decide which one people like the best and then paint all hydrants on campus that way."

Sugg said the trial colors will be painted starting next week.

BATTIPS

Anyone with story suggestions can call BATTIPS, The Battalion's phone line designed to improve communication between the newspaper and its readers.

BATTIPS' number is 845-3315.

Ideas can include news stories, feature ideas and personality profiles of interesting people.