

Rare whale trapped off coast of Cape Cod

BOSTON (AP) — A rare right whale swimming off Cape Cod has a rope deeply embedded in both sides of its upper jaw and may not survive, marine scientists said Sunday.

The rope, a five-eighths-inch-thick plastic line, is cutting into the whale's rostrum, or upper jaw, and has cinched around it, said David Matilla of the Center for Coastal Studies in Provincetown.

"The first question is, will it survive if we don't remove the entanglement? It's pretty unlikely from our experience," Matilla said. "The rope will continue to irritate the whale and it will die of infection."

"The second question is, will it heal if we get it out? That's a long shot too, frankly," he added.

Matilla, director of the center's disentanglement team, said the whale is still feeding and appears to be in good health, but its prognosis is not good.

Tissue around both sides of its mouth is dying or dead, evidence that infection has set in.

Matilla was part of a team that observed the huge mammal Saturday and attached a telemetry buoy so marine scientists could track it. As of Sunday night, the whale was about 80 miles off the coast of Cape Cod, near Georges Bank.

The whale is traveling north and is thought to be on its way to the Bay of Fundy. Rescuers do not know if it is a male or female.

Rough conditions at sea will keep rescuers from going out Monday, Matilla said. But they will consult with veterinarians and marine biologists to plot their next step.

Right whales frequent the Massachusetts coast in spring and fall. It is estimated there are just 300 of the animals left. The whale will remain endangered until the population is at least 1,200.

The New England Aquarium in Boston estimates about 60 percent of right whales have scarring from fishing lines.

"Lines can get wrapped around flippers or tails when feeding, especially with the right whale," said Alison Glass of the Gloucester-based Whale Center of New England.

Practice makes perfect



Art Thomason uses the empty parking lot at Reed Arena to practice for the upcoming X-trials competition in Bristol, Conn. Thomason will be competing in the flatland event and has been riding for 14 years.

Philippine government refuses to give ransom for the hostages

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AP) — Worried about feeding a cycle of kidnappings, the Philippine government stood firm Sunday on its no-ransom stance even as the clock was ticking on a deadline set by Muslim rebels threatening to kill three American hostages.

Thousands of troops scoured the southern island of Basilan, where the Abu Sayyaf rebels have said they will behead a Kansas couple and a Californian they held captive unless the Philippine government appoints two Malaysians to negotiate their release.

A rebel leader, Abu Sabaya, said Thursday that the deadline was after 72 hours, meaning

it would have passed Sunday afternoon. But in talks with a government negotiator, the rebels put the deadline at Monday. The exact time Monday was not announced.

The guerrillas want the government — currently advised by three FBI hostage specialists — to bring in two Malaysian go-betweens who helped work out a deal for the release of foreign tourists taken hostage last year.

Libya reportedly brokered that ransom deal involving millions of dollars, money the military says the rebels used to buy the arms and speedboats employed in the May 27 raid of a southwestern Philippine beach resort.

Bush to visit Spain despite some protests

MADRID, Spain (AP) — Thousands of Spaniards marched peacefully through downtown Madrid on Sunday to protest the upcoming visit of President Bush.



BUSH

Demonstrators carried signs saying "Bush Go Home" and criticized the president's stance on the death penalty, the environment and trade, as they marched from Madrid's Plaza de Espana to the Puerta del Sol square.

Bush arrives Tuesday in the Spanish capital for talks with conservative Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar on the initial stop of his first major overseas trip.

The six-day, five-nation tour will put Bush face to face with European leaders critical of his policies on missile defense, trade and the environment.

In Spain, unions, anti-globalization and anti-death penalty groups have planned several days of protests.

Spanish foreign minister Josep Pique said Sunday he understood the desire to protest against capital punishment during Bush's visit because "unfortunately in American society a majority is still in favor of the death penalty."

Police estimated more than 2,500 people attended the rally, filling the four-lane Gran Via boulevard for about an hour. A

helicopter hovered overhead. At the Puerta del Sol, a banner stretched across the square's platform said: "No to interventionism. No to neoliberal globalization. No to the destruction of the climate."

"The visit of Bush represents the evil image of the Empire," union leader Adolfo Jimenez told the crowd.

"We cannot but condemn the cooperation of the Spanish government with the United States by allowing American troops to be based in Spain," he added. "3,500 Americans are stationed on military bases in Spain."

The death penalty is a theme of anti-American sentiment in Spain, following Sunday's return of a Spanish citizen who spent more than 10 years on death row in the United States.

"Thank you, Spain!" Jose Martinez said as he arrived at Barajas airport. "There are words that can describe when an office is crushed by the weight of the world."

Last week, a Florida jury retrial acquitted Martinez after double pleading after pleas from Spanish King Juan Carlos I to the Madrid government. Thousands of Spaniards contributed to the defendant's legal fees.

At the rally, demonstrators condemned Monday's scheduled execution of Timothy McVeigh, convicted in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, and demanded a new trial for Muhammad Abu Jamal, the black U.S. nationalist sentenced to death for murder.

Eight children killed in Japanese school massacre

IKEDA, Japan (AP) — Mourners surrounded Mayuko Isaka with her favorite things — candy, flowers and toys — at a funeral Sunday for the sunny 7-year-old. Later, schoolchildren watched as a hearse carried away her tiny casket.

Mayuko's funeral was one of five Sunday in this quiet suburb of Osaka, where eight children,

was flanked by flower bouquets and letters from her classmates. After the service, a hearse carrying her tiny casket drove off to a crematorium. Kyodo News Agency said the funerals of the eight victims total were held in the Osaka area Sunday.

Seven girls and one boy, 6 to 8 were killed, and 13 students and two teachers wounded. Eight victims in the worst Houston reported in serious condition, making a steady recovery, Kan Dennis do said.

It was Japan's worst killing since a deadly nerve attack on Tokyo's subway years ago and the latest in a series of fatal slashings in a country that has prided itself on a low crime rate.

News reports said Takuma, a man with a history of mental illness — launched his killing spree just hours before he was interrogated about a fight year in a hotel in Osaka, Japan's second-largest city.

He reportedly had taken times his daily dose of antidepressants before the alleged attack. Investigators have seized a hatchet, a cutter knife and a pick as well as 300 unspecified tablets from Takuma's home, police said.

Police said he also was arrested two years ago on suspicion of slipping tranquilizers into the tea of teachers at the elementary school where he worked.

Media reports said he was not charged because he was deemed mentally unstable then was sent to a hospital where he was diagnosed schizophrenic and eventually released after treatment.

News in Brief

Videotaping of McVeigh's death denied by court

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court, without comment, Sunday turned down a request to allow the videotaping of Timothy McVeigh's execution.

The request, which had no bearing on McVeigh's case, had come from lawyers for a Pennsylvania man who could face the same method of execution. His lawyers argued the videotape could be helpful in their effort to show lethal injection is cruel and unusual punishment, and therefore unconstitutional.

The Justice Department asked the high court not to allow the videotaping, saying it would sensationalize the Oklahoma City bomber's death, scheduled for Monday morning. Taping also poses security and privacy problems, agency lawyers said.

"In light of the ubiquitous interest in the Oklahoma City bombing, the mere creation of a videotape of McVeigh's execution would present the government with unique challenges," Acting Solicitor General Barbara Underwood wrote.

"I saw her in the morning. She was chirpy and warm. The next time I saw her, her body was cold."

— Yoshitaka Isaka, victim's father

first- and second-graders, were knifed to death by a mentally disturbed former janitor two days earlier.

"I saw her in the morning. She was chirpy and warm. The next time I saw her, her body was cold," Mayuko's father, Yoshitaka Isaka, said tearfully at her funeral.

Police said Mamoru Takuma, 37, walked into the Ikeda elementary school unimpeded Friday and went classroom to classroom slashing his victims until two teachers managed to restrain him 15 minutes later.

"I thought I would be sentenced to death if I kill many children of the elite and intelligent," Takuma later said, according to police.

At the funeral of another victim, 7-year-old Ayano Moriwaki, a framed picture of the girl



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