

Continued from page 2B

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Man pleads guilty to conspiracy to hold Chinese national hostage

HOUSTON (AP) — A Taiwanese national pleaded guilty Tuesday to charges of conspiring to hold a Chinese national hostage pending payment of a smuggling fee.

Kan Yen Feng, 42, admitted in federal court in Houston to conspiring to seize Fu Mei Chen, 31, to compel others to pay a smuggling fee as a condition for her release.

Feng faces up to life in prison. He will be sentenced Dec. 17.

Court documents say Fu Mei Chen arrived off the coast of Guatemala by ship from China in February 1998 with many other Chinese nationals. Her family paid \$15,000 for her to be smuggled into the United States.

Chen later learned her fee was \$40,000, and Feng admitted to holding her in Guatemala for 15 months. In May 1999, he turned Chen over to Mexican smugglers, and they smuggled her into Brownsville.

She was then delivered to another smuggler, Yung Ming Chen, 43, in Houston. She couldn't afford the smuggling fee and was told that she would be sold to other smugglers in New York City.

June 1, 1999, Fe Mei Chen, who was being held in a second story room at the Roadrunner Inn on Highway 59 in Houston, fell and broke her back while trying to escape. She was taken to a hospital while Yung Ming Chen was charged with immigrant smuggling.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Edward Gallagher said Fe Mei Chen has partially recovered from her injuries, but she occasionally uses a wheelchair and must use a cane to walk.

He said she has a temporary visa, and prosecutors will help her seek a permanent visa to stay in the United States when Feng's case is concluded.

Yung Ming Chen was sentenced in February last year to 27 years in prison. He

also was ordered to pay a \$100,000 fine and pay nearly \$99,000 in restitution for Fe Mei Chen's medical expenses.

Yung Ming Chen's accomplices, Zeng Yuan Wu, 32, a Chinese national from Houston, and Duan Qiang Zhang, 33, a Chinese national from Los Angeles, also pleaded guilty to smuggling and were sentenced in March last year to 12 and 18 months in prison, respectively.

Paul Schell, who has faced first-term troubles ranging from riots to Boeing's departure, was trying Tuesday to avoid being the first Seattle mayor voted out of office since 1956.

City Attorney Mark Sidran and King County Councilman Greg Nickels were mounting strong challenges in the primary. Schell needed to beat at least one of them to advance to November's general election.

Last week's terrorist

attacks were "the kind of context that is going to favor an incumbent, for stability," said local historian Walt Crowley. But he said Schell "has a tremendous capacity to screw up" and questioned whether the mayor would survive the primary.

Schell, 63, knows he has a lot to overcome. He slept as Mardi Gras rioting left one dead and more than 70 injured this year. Boeing didn't warn him before announcing it was moving its headquarters to Chicago.

But the city's handling of the 1999 World Trade Organization protests has most strongly marred his tenure. About 50,000 demonstrators overwhelmed the 400-plus police officers assigned to control them; the city shut down in clouds of tear gas.

"Paul Schell has had his chance and I think we need new leadership in the city," said apartment manager Gary

Kirch, 56, who voted for Nickels. The top two finishers in the primary advance to the general election. Schell, Nickels and Sidran — all Democrats in this liberal city of 563,000 people — led a field of 12 candidates.

The last Seattle mayor to lose a general election was Allan Pomeroy in 1956. It's been even longer since a mayor failed to survive the primary — Charles Smith in 1936, Crowley said.

Schell has been stressing his record in Seattle's neighborhoods, where he boosted spending on roads and helped raise millions of dollars for new or improved parks and libraries.

Sidran is best known for pushing through "civility laws," which increased penalties for aggressive panhandling and urinating in public and banned sitting on sidewalks in some business districts.

State Fair Association hires cleanup company

DALLAS (AP) — The State Fair Association will pay a private company \$700,000 to clean up the grounds this year, leaving thousands of local workers out of a job.

Workers who lined up early Monday to apply for the jobs were met with signs that read, "We Do Not Have Any Grounds or Housekeeping Positions This Year."

The fair association has for years employed ticket takers, parking lot attendants and local residents to maintain grounds during fair time. About 1,500 people handled the cleanup jobs last year.

But a private company has been hired this year in a move fair officials say will save money and improve efficiency.

Bob Hilbun, the fair's vice president of maintenance and engineering, says, "It's been a humongous hassle" trying to keep the minimum-wage jobs filled and properly supervised. He said

using a private firm will help reduce workers' compensation claims and insurance costs.

"Why are they cutting us out?" asked Dwight Harris, who was ready to apply to work his ninth fair.

"How could you let a contractor come in when we've been coming out here 10 to 15 years?" said Curtis Mack, who said he had "never missed a day" in 13 years of working the fairgrounds.

The ticket and parking lot jobs have been filled. But workers are still needed for this 107th State Fair of Texas, which begins a 24-day run Sept. 28.

Sharon Martin, a maintenance worker at the Dallas Convention Center, told *The Dallas Morning News* for Tuesday's editions that she made about \$1,300 last year cleaning up around Big Tex. She saved her earnings for Christmas presents.

INS detains 2 men for questioning

TYLER, Texas (AP) — Two men being held on immigration violations in an East Texas jail were questioned Monday by the FBI.

On Friday evening, an INS agent arrested Mohammed L. Fahad, 18, on a federal detainer.

Tyler-based FBI agents arrested Mustafa Abu Jdai, 28, early Saturday and are holding him for the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, according to Smith County jail records.

The pair, caught with expired visas, will be in the county jail until Thursday, when they will be transferred to Fort Worth to begin deportation proceedings, the Tyler Morning Telegraph reported in a story for Tuesday's editions.

INS spokesman Tomas Zuniga in Dallas declined to talk about the men and referred questions about them to the FBI. "We've been instructed not to make any comments on anything related to Tuesday's tragic events," Zuniga told *The Associated Press* on Monday evening.

Spokesmen for the FBI did not immediately return calls to the AP.

Fahad was born in India while Jdai's jail information does not list a country of origin, said Lt. Deal Folmar, jail administrator. He said he does not know where they were arrested or whether they know each other.

The two were interviewed by the FBI on Monday morning, a sergeant in the Smith County jail told the AP. The INS fingerprinted the pair that evening, said the officer, who declined to give his name.

The men have been segregated from the other prisoners, kept in isolated cells. "That's for safety purposes. In general population, they might have problems," Smith County Sheriff's Department Maj. Bobby Garmon.

Tyler is about 90 miles of Dallas.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Middle-school students charged with terrorist threats
FORT WORTH (AP) — Three middle-school students have been charged with making a terrorist threat for allegedly threatening and harassing a schoolmate who was born in India. Police say the charges against the three Forest Oak Middle School students qualify for misdemeanor prosecution, but they'll ask prosecutors to upgrade charges to a felony hate crime. The three were taken into custody Friday after another student told school officials that the three were taunting and threatening to "shoot and kill" the Indian student in the wake of last week's terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. Two of the students detained are 13 years old, the other is 14. All have been suspended from the southeast Fort Worth school. Fort Worth school superintendent Thomas Tocco this week sent letters home to parents promoting tolerance.

UT System offers resources to help with attack aftermath
AUSTIN (AP) — The University of Texas System is offering its medical and technical expertise to help emergency response officials in Washington, D.C. and New York. Chancellor R.D. Burck said Tuesday the 15-campus system has trauma surgeons, nurses, lab technicians, forensic scientists, counselors, psychologists, social workers, translators and other experts ready to help in any way needed. "The full resources of the UT System are available to the nation in response to these tragic events," Burck said. UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas already has pitched in. A medical team drove to Washington last week to deliver skin grafts.

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11am-2pm Mini-Carnival at Rudder Fountain
Come dunk the following Presidents from around campus
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*Corps Commander-Joe Dickerson *OCA-Tracy Edwards
This day is brought to you by Off Campus Aggies (OCA), BusOps, and Off Campus Student Services

CAREER PATHS FOR PERFORMANCE STUDIES MAJORS

Are you interested in finding out more information on career paths for Performance Studies Majors?
If so, come to Henderson Hall, Room 114, on Wednesday, September 19 from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Dr. Peter Lieuwen will discuss "Career Paths for Performance Studies Majors." An informal question and answer session will follow.
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This presentation is sponsored by the Student Counseling Service, a Department in the Division of Student Affairs.