

## NEWS

## National and world news in brief

By Patrick Webster

## U.S. criticizes Italian prisoner exchange plan

WASHINGTON: The U.S. Department of State and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice were quick to condemn a prisoner exchange deal with the Taliban made this week between Italy and Afghanistan.

The deal, which included the release of five prisoners associated with the Taliban in return for the release of an Italian journalist and his Afghan civilian colleagues, was immediately criticized by State Department officials and resulted in a direct phone call from Secretary Rice to Italian Foreign Minister Massimo D'Alema. U.S. foreign policy does not support hostage and prisoner exchanges.

"Given the increased threat created for all of us who have people on the ground in places like Afghanistan, we expect that concessions will not be made in the future," said State Department spokesman Dave McCormack. "The concern, I think, is obvious in that you have individuals who are potentially quite dangerous who have been released from prison."

Despite the increase in diplomatic communications between the U.S. and Italy and public statements made, officials maintain that the diplomatic ties between the two countries remain "cordial."

## U.S. supports Colombian prisoner exchange plan

BOGOTA, Colombia: American officials and lawmakers are supporting a Colombian plan to exchange a group of rebel prisoners for a group of hostages that include three American defense contractors.

The rebel group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), is a roughly 19,000-strong army of armed revolutionaries, is on the U.S. terrorist groups watch list and has executed American prisoners before.

The Colombian government has proposed negotiations that would ask the rebel group to free at least 61 hostages in return for a yet-to-be-determined number of imprisoned rebels. FARC has not yet agreed to negotiate, fearing that the opportunity would be used to kill or capture their negotiators. The U.S. has proposed sending American officials and even U.S. congressmen down to observe the negotiation and guarantee its legitimacy. Some members of congress have even volunteered.

"The most important thing is the offer from these Congress members to go to the negotiation zone as guarantors," said official Colombian peace negotiator Luis Carlos Restrepo. "We believe this could help give confidence to the FARC, which has always been afraid to enter talks."

The 61 recent hostages are thought to be a part of more than 3,000 hostages being currently held by the rebel group.

## North Korea abandons disarmament

BEIJING, China: Talks aimed at stopping the enrichment of uranium and the development of nuclear weapons in North Korea were cut short when the North Korean negotiators left the meetings over a financial dispute.

The financial problems threaten to undo the progress made during the negotiations since the agreement made on Feb. 13 in which North Korea would ultimately dismantle its program and make a full disclosure of the advancements made. Before, the negotiators from North and South Korea, the United States, China, Japan and Russia were optimistic that progress would continue to be made.

The main sticking point is \$25 million in funds that was frozen by U.S. investigators in Banco Delta Asia (BDA), a bank based in Macau. The U.S. had actually agreed to unfreeze the North Korean assets about a week before, but the funds still had not been released as of the beginning of negotiations on Thursday. The North Korean delegation refused

to continue negotiations until the U.S. released the funds, though American diplomats contend that the delay was merely a "technical issue."

"The problem has been that the North Koreans said they must have this BDA matter finalized before they move forward on the other issues and that sort of sequential approach slowed us down," said chief American envoy Christopher Hill.

However, many negotiators were confident that the so far promising negotiations would continue otherwise on schedule and at the same pace.

"No matter the difficulties we face in the talks, no matter how hard, we have the capability to overcome them," Chinese representative Wu Dawei said at a press conference.



Source: CNN.com, Yahoo! News



Mike Sharkey/THE BEHREND BEACON

Behrend apartment roofs are covered in trash which adds to the string of damages like the ones in Niagara Hall.

## Behrend residence halls suffer repeated continued from page 1

Most of the charges have been for relatively minor things, Lindey said. "I know there's been a lot of trash in the recycling bins," he said. He also said that food in the trash cans and chew spit have been two of the most common damages to the hall. However, there have been some major damages as well. "On the third floor, someone took glass out of the fire extinguisher case and dropped it on the ground," Lindey said. "It shattered everywhere." He also said that someone threw a rock through a window in the lobby, which was another major damage to the hall.

Lindey has had some suggestions on how to help students avoid some of the minor damages to the hall. "I've been trying to get the recycling bins taken out," he said, referring to the damages to the hall when students place their garbage in the recycling bins. "Housing [Services] is all insistent on having them there."

Lindey says that the damages are caused by only "one or two people," but he understands why everyone on the hall is charged. "I think what they charge is reasonable," he said. "They want to teach us a lesson. There is a ridiculous amount of damages- it's unnecessary."

Biology major Jaye Menoher, a Niagara Hall resident, says he does not like how the whole hall is charged for the damages. "The people who do them should be held responsible," Menoher said. He understands why the entire floor is charged, though. "They have to do it," he said, "because they don't [know who caused them]."

The money that residents pay due to the damages does not stay here at Behrend, however. Lindey says that all the money from damages goes to University Park.

## Travel delays leave Behrend students continued page 1

Mother Nature had other plans. "The planes were freezing in Philadelphia, so the US Airways employees kept pushing back our departure time, telling us the plane will eventually take off," Brown said. "We waited from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. before they finally told us that the flight was canceled."

Along with thousands of other travelers, Brown and her travel companions found out that airlines will not pay for hotel rooms when a flight is canceled due to weather conditions. "We paid a couple hundred more dollars for a few hours; it wasn't even worth it," she said.

When Brown returned to the airport on Saturday, they found that leaving Jamaica was going to be no easier than the day before. "We weren't able to get any flights out because the flight crews were stuck in Pittsburgh. US Airways put us up in a hotel this time because it was their fault."

Brown eventually got to Charlotte, North Carolina on Monday and was supposed to fly to Cleveland at 7:30 that evening, but the plane was delayed again until 9:00 p.m. Once in Cleveland, Brown rented a car and drove back to Erie. She got to Erie at 2:30 a.m. Tuesday morning, four days after she was supposed to return.

Senior Kara Struski remarked, "It was just chaotic in the airport." Struski, who was traveling back to Erie from Florida, flew Delta Air Lines. "They gave us some ridiculous excuses as to why the flights were delayed," she said, "the best had to be that they were late because of paperwork issues."

"I got in line at the Delta counter when the line was still relatively short and I still had to wait over two hours. The line stretched through the whole terminal. Some of those people had to have been waiting for at least five hours," Struski said.

In total from Friday to Saturday morning, more than 3,600 flights were canceled nationwide because of the effects of the storm in the Northeast. JetBlue, US Airways, Delta Air Lines and American Airlines all reported cancellations.

## Students workload expands beyond the continued page 1

Rothenberg also says that he feels that having a job while being in school helps him prepare for life after college and learn responsibility. "Instead of just going to class and then coming home to party with my friends and having all the time I need to do my homework, I have to worry about having enough time to get everything done. I think it helps keep my mind on what I need to be doing instead of what I want to do."

But Rothenberg is just one case of a Behrend student working his way through school. Behrend senior Steve Miller has been juggling work and school since he came to college. Miller works at Behrend's restaurant Bruno's about 25 to 30 hours a week. Miller says that while working days and evenings leads to some late nights of homework, he

still manages to maintain his grades. "Working makes for some late nights of studying but I still manage to do well. I have learned to manage my time really well." Miller also says that he feels working through school also looks good to employers after college. "I think they like to see that a student worked, because it shows them that person can balance many aspects of their life, and manage their time well."

Working while going to school is something many college students have to deal with. Both Miller and Rothenberg are two examples of students that not only take on the responsibility of going to school and maintaining good grades, but also of trying to earn a living while doing so. While it isn't always easy, it is just what they have to do.

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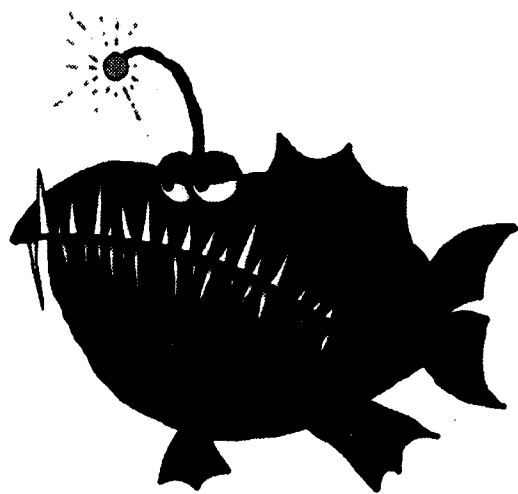
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