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NEWS DIGEST

your quick guide to news from around the world

Rebels begin to rule after victory in Zaire

1 KINSHASA, Zaire — Zaire's new leaders on Monday rejected Western calls for quick elections, while soldiers loyal to the deposed president surrendered in humiliation — some forced to their knees by taunting crowds.

Residents gathered at military barracks of the former government to vent animosity that built during Mobutu Sese Seko's repressive 32 years of ruling — and plundering — Zaire.

"You took our jewels," spat Marie-Claire Kabata, her body heaving and feet stamping. "I've just today worn my jewels. I couldn't before. You took our jewels, stole our money, robbed our homes. There was nowhere to go. We couldn't go to the store. We couldn't go out..."

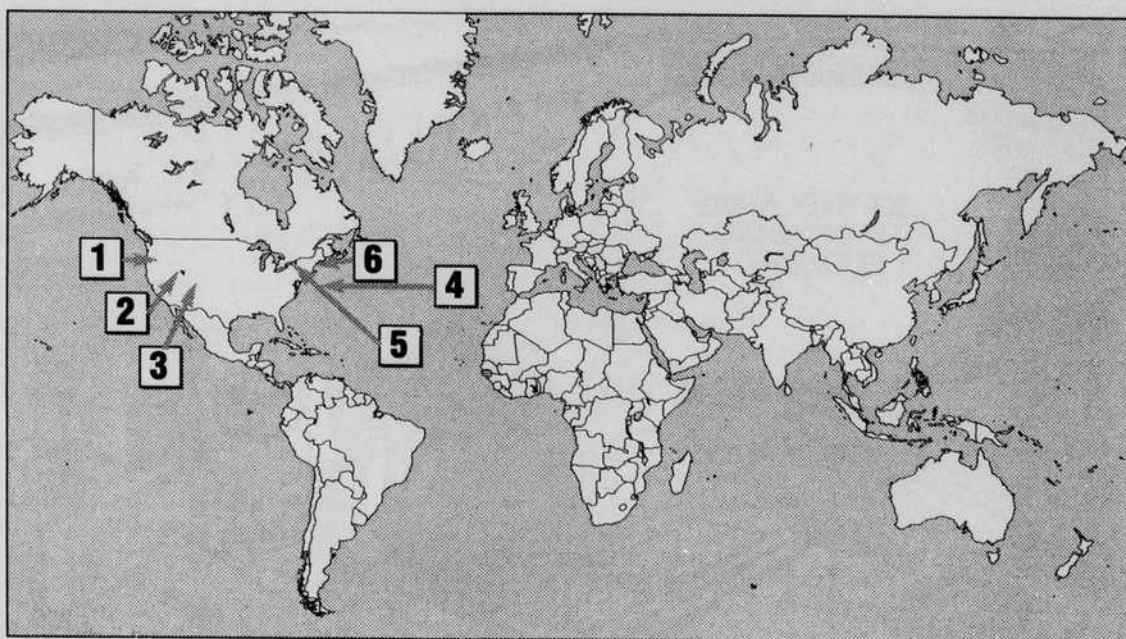
Her voice drowned in the cacophony of curses and taunts from others beside her. Rebels kicked or slapped soldiers who reacted to the torrent of abuse, drawing wild cheers.

Thousands of Mobutu's soldiers have sworn allegiance to Laurent Kabila, who proclaimed himself president Saturday after sweeping east to west across Zaire in seven months. While Kabila makes the transition from military commander to head of state, his deposed rival temporarily has holed up in the West African nation of Togo.

At their first news conference in the capital, Kabila representatives promised to announce a new government Tuesday that would include a broad spectrum of political parties.

Elections will wait, however, until the country is ready for them to be conducted fairly, said Deo Bugera, secretary-general of Kabila's movement, the Democratic Alliance of the Armed Forces of Congo-Zaire.

"Before elections, you need preparations, you need civic spirit," he said.



AMA backs bill ending late-term abortions

2 WASHINGTON — Bidding for a veto-proof majority in the Senate, Republican backers of a ban on a certain late-term abortion procedure agreed to minor changes in their bill Monday and pocketed the endorsement of the American Medical Association in return.

Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., leading sponsor of the legislation, said the changes are designed to "protect the doctor who's delivering the baby who runs into complications" and must unexpectedly abort the fetus because the mother's life is in jeopardy.

The AMA, which last week had declined to endorse the measure, provided Santorum with a pledge of support.

"Although our general policy is to oppose legislation-criminalizing medical practice or procedure, the AMA has supported such legislation where the procedure was narrowly defined and not medically indicated," wrote P. John Seward, the AMA's executive vice president.

The pending Senate bill "now meets both those tests," he wrote.

Traces of bomb found on McVeigh's clothes

3 DENVER — Traces of explosives from a bomb detonator were found on the T-shirts and pants Timothy McVeigh was wearing when he was pulled over on a traffic violation after the Oklahoma City bombing, an FBI expert testified Monday.

Explosives residue was also found on a pair of ear plugs McVeigh was carrying in his pocket when he was pulled over on a traffic violation after the April 19, 1995, blast, said FBI chemist Steven Burmeister.

The scientist also linked the truck McVeigh allegedly rented to the bomb itself, saying that a blown-apart truck shard found near the blast site was embedded with crystals of ammonium nitrate, the main ingredient in the fuel-and fertilizer bomb.

Burmeister, the first witness to provide scientific testimony linking McVeigh to bomb materials, said that the pants, shirt and ear plugs all contained a fine powder called PETN, which is used in bomb detonator cord.

Supreme Court denies appeal by murderer

4 WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court Monday refused, without comment, to hear an appeal filed on behalf of Oregon death row inmate Marco Montez.

Montez, 35, was convicted of kidnapping, raping, torturing and murdering Candice P. Straub, 26, in a Portland motel room in 1987. He set her body and the room on fire to try to cover up the murder.

Montez met Straub when they worked picking strawberries together. They lived together in a motel room to save money.

Montez piled clothing and furniture on top of Straub's nude body on the bed and soaked the entire pile in charcoal-lighting fluid.

No execution date has been set for Montez.

After the execution last week of convicted killer Harry Charles Moore in Oregon, the state attorney general's office estimated it would be four to five years before anyone else is executed. All 19 inmates currently on Oregon's death row are appealing their convictions.

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