

## News briefs

**Blasts rock embassy, consulate in Venezuela**

CARACAS, Venezuela — Two powerful explosions ripped into the Spanish Embassy and Colombian Consulate in Caracas minutes apart early Tuesday, stoking fears of a violent escalation of the dispute between President Hugo Chavez and his opponents.

The two blasts about 2 a.m. blew out windows for blocks and injured four people, leaving some residents in a posh neighborhood near the Spanish Embassy believing they had experienced an earthquake. The four-story Colombian Consulate was turned into a charred, windowless shell.

The explosions came less than 48 hours after Chavez warned the governments of Colombia and Spain, as well as the United States, against "meddling" in Venezuela's

affairs. The three countries have criticized Chavez's recent crackdown on his opponents.

No one claimed responsibility for the bombings, but leaflets scattered at both sites were signed by a pro-government group, leading to speculation that radical supporters of the president were responsible.

Government officials rejected the accusation, saying the leaflets could have been planted by opponents to the government.

Vice President Jose Vicente Rangel repudiated the attacks as "a form of terrorism never seen in Venezuela" and suggested that Chavez opponents may have been involved.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Philip Reeker condemned the bombings, saying they underscored the need for all sides to honor a Feb. 18 non-violence pledge, refrain from "confrontational rhetoric" and create a

truth commission to investigate violent incidents.

One leaflet left at the Spanish Embassy was addressed to Cesar Gaviria, secretary general of the Organization of American States who has led peace talks in Venezuela, as well as former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, who also has helped with the peace process. The note read in part: "The revolution does not need your intervention. The armed people will resolve this crisis."

The bombings highlight the tension in Venezuela only weeks after a nationwide strike hobbled Venezuela's oil industry, caused food and gasoline shortages and cost the country an estimated \$4 billion.

The strike, which fizzled early this month, was aimed at forcing Chavez to resign from office, call early elections or accept a non-binding referendum on his rule.

—Patrice M. Jones, *Chicago Tribune (KRT)*

**Memos predict attacks after Iraq invasion**

WASHINGTON — When the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq begins, dictator Saddam Hussein will launch a terror offensive that will be joined by extremists around the world, according to new intelligence bulletins obtained by the New York Daily News.

The warnings also report that Hussein's henchmen in foreign embassies are "awaiting the go-ahead signal from Baghdad," but one source indicated to The Daily News that the operatives were under surveillance.

"We are quite familiar with who these agents are," the source said.

The bulletins distributed by the Defense Intelligence Agency on Feb. 11 and 13 were the strongest warnings yet about the likelihood of terrorism once war begins, and for the first time predicted an uprising that would spread from al-Qaida to terror

organizations that are not Islamic.

"Anti-U.S. terrorist attacks during any conflict with Iraq are a certainty," the defense agency informed intelligence and policy leaders in a Feb. 13 memo. "Indigenous terrorist groups in Greece, Turkey, Italy, Peru, Chile, Japan and Southeast Asia are the most likely to have some kind of terrorist response to U.S. military action in Iraq."

The Pentagon alerted its commanders in the U.S., Bahrain and Qatar this month that it was raising the terror threat level from "significant" to the maximum level, "high."

The classified memos express an unnerving certainty that terrorists will retaliate for a U.S. invasion of Iraq and contradict public statements by top officials who have insisted the nation's color-coded threat alert is not tied to a looming war.

—James Gordon Meek, *New York Daily News (KRT)*

# Study links school testing to future successes

The study found that students who do well on high school assessment tests will have a higher freshman success rate

Jan Montry  
City/State Politics Reporter

The academic performance of collegiate freshmen is closely related to how they perform on in-state high school testing, according to a study released about two weeks ago.

Until the study — conducted by a team of higher education faculty and an assessment specialist — was completed, it wasn't clear whether the benchmark testing accurately measured preparation for college or the SAT.

"While there is no single perfect predictor of first-year college success, this study reaffirms that there is a positive relationship among state assessments, high school GPA, college GPA and the SAT," Oregon University System Chancellor Richard Jarvis said in a statement.

**Part 1 of 3  
Moving from high school to college**

**Today:**  
Study links high school and college achievements.

**Thursday:**  
OUS moves to new admission standards.

**Friday:**  
Community reaction to the new study.

Preliminary results of the study showed students who met or exceeded the standard benchmark score in high school more often received a higher college GPA in related courses than students who did not meet the standard. For instance, 71 percent of students who surpassed the standard in math beyond calculus had an average college GPA of 3.0. Students who only met the standard in the same area, however, had an average col-

lege GPA of 2.6.

With such findings, Oregon Department of Education spokesman Gene Evans said benchmarking is effective in judging a student's preparation for college and the SAT — something the Oregon Legislature has questioned in the past.

"I think the big confirmation for us at the department is that the 10th grade benchmark is testing what we want it to test," he said.

Evans said the test also serves as a diagnostic tool for educators; now teachers can look at benchmark scores for 10th graders and see who needs more preparation for the SAT and for college.

The preliminary study results were presented before the Oregon House Education Committee on Monday and were received well by legislators.

Rep. Patt Farr, R-Eugene, said the committee was "very positive" about the results, adding that there has been a disconnect between high school programs and college.

"At face value, everything looks

pretty good," he said. "We all seem to agree we have to do something to prepare kids for college success."

Christine Tell, lead investigator for the study, said the research will be used to help develop proficiency-based admission standards, which will measure what students can do, instead, for instance, of whether they fulfilled the required amount of hours to graduate high school.

Tell said the study will give students the chance to make choices about their education before they get to college or take the SAT. Parents, teachers and counselors also will benefit from the information because they will be able to help support students in their quest for higher education.

"It's all about giving students the opportunity, two years prior (to college), to make some decisions," Tell said. "The importance of this to us is that high school students need this information."

The study examined how well

10th-grade student performance on benchmark tests matches up with students' success as college freshmen. Indicators for freshman success in the study included overall freshman GPA, freshman GPA in individual subject areas and whether students came back for a second year of college.

Every year, high school sophomores take the state-conducted Oregon Student Assessment Test, which measures five areas: reading/literature, writing, math problem solving and math knowledge skills. The scores are then weighed in comparison to the 10th-grade benchmark, which is an index set by the Oregon Department of Education.

For this study, the OUS team gauged the GPA of college freshman who took the benchmark test as sophomores in 1999 and recorded how many of them moved on to their second year.

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## Tuition

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along, I'm going to do everything I can to avoid adding to the surcharge, and I will only do it if I'm in a position where it's the only way I can assure that scheduled classes are available spring term," Moseley said.

Pilliod was concerned about student notification of a possible surcharge, verifying with Moseley that students will receive a letter in their March tuition bills that explains the budget situation and the possibility of further surcharges.

ASUO State Affairs Coordinator Adam Petkun also asked Moseley

what could be done in the future to ensure that students are brought to the table when tuition and enrollment issues are discussed.

Moseley said he would "think about" a more concrete method of shared governance, such as a written statement guaranteeing student involvement, but added that

he would not sacrifice financial aid or classes to avoid the surcharge — even if a group of students supported it.

"In the end, the truth is I have to make that decision, and we're not going to vote on tuition. But I'm going to discuss it with you and let you know what the choices are," Mose-

ley said. "I think that your role really is in giving me your advice and discussing it with me. And I'm happy to have meetings like this, probably as frequently as you'd be willing to have them."

Contact the senior news reporter at [janmontry@dailymerald.com](mailto:janmontry@dailymerald.com).

A bag of chips will get you through your math class,  
but it will get a family of four through the whole day.

Each dollar donated will provide six pounds of  
food to the fight against hunger in Lane County.

You can help fight hunger in Lane County by donating even  
one dollar to the Governor's Food Drive until February 28.



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