

Today	Thursday	Friday
High: 54 Low: 35 Precip: 10%	High: 54 Low: 35 Precip: 0%	High: 58 Low: 35 Precip: 0%

IN BRIEF

Car bombs kill at least 12 in Baghdad

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Car bombs killed at least a dozen people in Baghdad and another major city Tuesday as pressure mounted on interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi to avert a full-scale U.S. attack on the insurgent stronghold Fallujah. Meanwhile, the kidnapers of aid worker Margaret Hassan threatened to turn her over to an al-Qaida faction led by Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi unless Britain agreed within 48 hours to pull its troops from Iraq, Al-Jazeera television reported.

Afghanistan kidnapers say demands flexible

KABUL, Afghanistan — A Taliban splinter group threatening to kill three foreign U.N. hostages said Tuesday there was "some flexibility" about their demands, which include the world body's withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Government officials were optimistic the Iraq-style abduction could end with the foreigners' release but

said they had no contact with the kidnapers one day before a deadline on the hostages' fate.

Jaish-al Muslimeen, or Army of Muslims, claimed it abducted Annetta Flanagan of Northern Ireland, Filipino diplomat Angelito Nayan and Shqipe Habibi of Kosovo in the Afghan capital Thursday. All three hostages were in the country to help manage its Oct. 9 presidential election, apparently won by U.S.-backed interim leader Hamid Karzai.

Sudanese surround camps, forcibly move refugees

KHARTOUM, Sudan — The Sudanese security forces surrounded several camps in the war-torn region of Darfur on Tuesday, relocated refugees against their will and denied access to humanitarian groups, the United Nations said. Sudan denied closing off the camps but said angry Arab tribesmen gathered in the area.

The U.N. World Food Program said several camps were surrounded — apparently in retaliation for the abduction of 18 Arabs by Darfur rebels — and that the world body was forced to pull 88 relief workers from other areas where there has been an upsurge in violence in recent days.

The World Food Program fears the government may start forcing people from the camps back to their home villages, where there is less protection from government-backed militias known as Janjaweed that have been attacking towns, said spokeswoman Christiane Berthiaume.

— The Associated Press

Enrollment, diversity grow in 'strong' freshman class

Despite an increased enrollment of students of color, the number of international students has decreased

BY MORIAH BALINGIT
NEWS REPORTER

A fourth-week head count of the University population indicates a larger and smarter entering class with more non-resident students, more students of color, fewer international students and more students enrolled at the University overall.

Fourth-week enrollment statistics show the University population at 20,339, a 306-student increase from last fall, according to the Registrar's Office.

Director of Admissions Martha Pitts said applications to the University were down this year at 8,598, but the University did receive more complete applications. She said 3,009 students accepted the University's offer of admission, which is 250 more students than last year's freshman class. She added that a greater proportion of students who were admitted actually enrolled at the University than last year.

"The students (that applied) were more serious about attending the University," Pitts said.

Additionally, Pitts said this year's freshman class has a slightly lower average grade point average, but a higher average SAT score.

"It's a very strong class," she said. About a third of the freshman

class, 953 students, is non-resident, which Pitts said meets the University's goal.

"We think that it's important that they learn in a University with students with a wide variety of backgrounds," Pitt said. "And geographic diversity is part of that."

The number of students of color increased this year from 2,623 last year to 2,706 this year, Pitts said. Students of color constitute 13.3 percent of the whole University population, a 0.3 percent increase from last year. Statistics on students of color do not include international students.

While Pitts said she was "thrilled" with the increase, she added that "it's certainly not the critical mass to create the kind of climate and learning environment we'd like to see."

Pitts said the University has stepped up its recruitment of students of color in recent years.

While the University's population has increased, it is seeing declining numbers in students from other parts of the world.

According to the Office of International Programs, the international-student population is down again this year at 1,170 students compared to 1,273 last fall, with fewer returning students. The number of

international students has been decreasing since 2001.

International Programs Director Magid Shirzadegan said there are several reasons that contributed to the decrease, including rising tuition rates.

"It could be that students can't afford to come for all four years," he said of the decreased number of returning students. "It could have to do with the increased cost of education."

Shirzadegan added that in the aftermath of Sept. 11, it has become increasingly difficult for international students to obtain student visas, especially students from Muslim countries. Some students have even been denied visas because they are considered security risks, Shirzadegan said.

"The increased scrutiny by the U.S. Consulate ... has scared a lot of students from coming to U.S. universities," he said. "Parents of students are worried (about) their kids being harassed by government officials."

He said the number of students from Muslim countries has decreased substantially since Sept. 11. However, he said more students have been coming from other regions of the world, including Southeast Asia. Shirzadegan said there were "a little more students from Korea and more from Taiwan."

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National: Preliminary claims have no bearing on outcome

Continued from page 1

As for Bush, declaring victory is nothing more than a weapon in political warfare. It has no bearing on who will serve as president a minute past noon Jan. 20, 2005, but the White House hopes the tactic will undercut challenges and create a sense of inevitability about Bush's second term.

Not so fast, said Kerry's team. Democrats were considering sending political and legal teams to Ohio, already the scene of dueling lawsuits over provisional ballots. Inside the Bush campaign, an intense debate

waged into the wee hours as some aides said parachuting teams into Ohio would only create a political stalemate in a state Bush hopes he has already won.

Florida fell into Bush's lap with relative ease. Kerry took New Hampshire from Bush — the first and perhaps only state to switch parties — but it has just four electoral votes. That left Ohio as Kerry's only hope.

The holdup was over provisional ballots — those cast by people whose qualifications to vote were challenged. At 3 a.m. EST, Bush had a lead of 125,000 votes; there were more provisional ballots outstanding.

IN BRIEF

Nontraditional Student Union hosts open house

The Nontraditional Student Union will host an open house in the basement of the EMU today to provide information and resources for students who have taken a different path on the road to a college degree.

The open house is part of National Nontraditional Student Week.

"I think a lot of people are non-trads and they don't know it," NSU Director Cindy Ingram said. "We are the largest growing population of undergrads in the U.S."

The National Center for Education

Statistics defines a non-traditional student as one who delayed attending college, has dependents other than a spouse, never completed high school, transferred from a junior college or works full time while attending school.

READ MORE ONLINE

For more information, visit darkwing.uoregon.edu/~nsu.

If a student meets three of the five criteria, he or she is considered "highly non-traditional."

Ingram cited a 2002 study by the National Center for Education Statistics, which found that non-traditional students have a 50 percent chance of achieving their academic goals.

"We are an at-risk population, because primarily we're the lowest income of all students and a lot of us have kids," Ingram said.

"So this is why we have a Nontraditional Student Union."

Ingram says the open house will be a chance for students to learn more about how the NSU can help them achieve their academic goals.

"A single mom in her mid-thirties might have different barriers to success than a 19-year-old white man," she said.

Throughout the year, the NSU provides a variety of resources in their office near The Break in 20A EMU.

"A lot of what we do is just create a safe space for people who feel different."

— Gabe Bradley

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