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EUROPE

Croatia Sees First Openly Gay Candidate

Croatia's small Croatian Bell party has put forward the nation's first openly gay political candidate. Vinko Kalinic wants to represent the northern region of Zagorje in Parliament. According to Javno.com, he is a reporter, songwriter, fisherman and former intelligence officer and seminarian. "I came out of the closet exclusively as rebellion and [in] solidarity with those who were discriminated against and humiliated, and I state that with pride everywhere I go," he told Javno. "My goal in politics is to, by coming out of the closet, have the sexual orientation of people become a completely irrelevant issue."

AMERICAS

Uruguay Passes Civil Union Law

Uruguay's House of Representatives passed a civil union law for gay and straight couples Nov. 29. The measure had passed the Senate in September. It is expected to become law before year's end. Uruguay will be the first Latin American country to grant same-sex couples access to civil unions on the national level. Couples must live together for five years before they can take advantage of the law. Spousal rights will be granted in areas such as health care, pensions, parenting and inheritance. Other Latin American localities with civil union laws include the city of Buenos Aires, the Argentine province of Río Negro, the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul, Mexico City and the Mexican state of Coahuila, which borders Texas.

Brazilian TV Network to Pay \$42M for Outing Model

A São Paulo court has ordered the Brazilian network Rede TV to pay \$42.7 million to model Carlos Alberto Cunha Gonçalves after he was



Croatian Bell party candidate Vinko Kalinic wants his sexuality to be an "irrelevant issue."

outed by a guest on the talk show *Superpop*, GayNewsWatch.com reported Nov. 23.

Judge Carlos Dias Motta ruled that the remark invaded Gonçalves' privacy. "Programs that are notoriously sensationalist should at a minimum make sure to respect the dignity of individuals because freedom of expression, achieved at a high price, cannot justify violating privacy, which is also a principle of the federal constitution," Motta said.

ASIA/PACIFIC

Man Hanged in Iran for 'Anal Rape'

A 21-year-old man was hanged in Iran's Kermanshah Central Prison on "anal rape" (ighab) charges Dec. 5 despite a November order from the nation's chief justice, Ayatollah Syed Mahmood Hashemi Shahroudi, that stayed the execution and sent the case for a retrial.

Shahroudi had determined that Makvan Mouloudzadeh's sentence violated Islamic teaching, decrees of senior Shiite clerics and Iranian law, after Mouloudzadeh's lawyer argued that there was no evidence of the alleged crimes and that several elements of the case violated proper procedure.

Shahroudi's retrial order, however, required review and assent from the Special Supervision Bureau of the Iranian Justice Department. According to the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), the bureau declined to assent, upheld the sentence and ordered the execution to be carried out.

Mouloudzadeh was convicted in June of committing sodomitic rape when he was 13 years old despite the fact that, at his trial, his three accusers recanted their accusations, saying they had lied under duress. Mouloudzadeh likewise said his confession to the crimes had been coerced.

"This is a shameful and outrageous travesty of justice," IGLHRC executive director Paula Ettelbrick said after the hanging. "How many more young Iranians have to die before the international community takes action?"

Meanwhile, in an e-mail circulated the day before the execution, Scott Long, director of Human Rights Watch's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights Program, suggested that press releases and news articles reporting on Shahroudi's preliminary stay of Mouloudzadeh's death sentence could, in fact, speed up the execution.

Although Long's e-mail did not name IGLHRC, it seemingly referred, in part, to a Nov. 14 press release titled, "Execution in Iran Halted: IGLHRC Cites Global Protest as Central." The press release

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