

Greece: Revolt over austerity deal grows ahead of vote

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Greece’s left-wing government launched a frantic 24-hour effort late Tuesday to push more austerity measures through Parliament and meet demands from European creditors as it faced down mounting anger at home.

The belt-tightening measures, which include pension cuts and higher sales tax rates on everything from condoms to racehorses, were agreed upon with eurozone leaders to prevent the Greek economy from collapsing, and as part of a planned third bailout worth 85 billion euros (\$94 billion).

The new measures mean economically-battered Greeks will pay more for most goods and services by the end of the week.

Hard-liners in Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras’ own Syriza party were in open revolt, and unions and trade associations representing civil servants, municipal workers, pharmacy owners and others called or extended strikes to coincide with Wednesday’s Parliament vote.

Energy Minister Panagiotis Lafazanis said lead eurozone lender Germany and its allies had acted like “financial assassins” by forcing the deal on Athens, and urged Tsipras to reject it.

“The deal is unacceptable,” Lafazanis said in a statement. “It



An anti-austerity protester places a Greek flag next to riot policemen as they guard one of the entrances of the Greek Parliament during a rally against the government’s agreement with its creditors in Athens, Monday.

may pass through Parliament ... but the people will never accept it and will be united in their fight against it.”

In an interview on state TV, Tsipras said he would not step down, despite the open dissent within his own Cabinet and party. “I will not run away from my responsibilities,” he said.

He also criticized the deal, but said it was the best Greece could get.

“The policies imposed on us were irrational,” Tsipras said.

“We faced a tough and punitive position from our partners ... But the (agreement) does offer a way out of the crisis.”

Pro-European opposition parties have pledged support for the bailout bills, but Tsipras could effectively lose his majority in Parliament, weakening his ability to push through measures that he had himself vehemently opposed until a few weeks ago.

Tsipras’ coalition partner, Defense Minister Panos

Kammenos, also bitterly denounced the new deal.

“There was a coup. A coup in the heart of Europe,” said Kammenos, who heads the right-wing Independent Greeks party.

“They want the government to fall and replace it with one not elected by the Greek people.”

The government holds 162 seats in Greece’s 300-member Parliament, and more than 30 of Syriza’s own lawmakers have publicly voiced objections.

BRIEFLY

Obama calls for shorter sentences for some convicts

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Calling it an issue America can’t afford to ignore, President Barack Obama laid out an expansive vision Tuesday for fixing the criminal justice system by focusing on communities, courtrooms and cellblocks. He announced a federal review of the use of solitary confinement and urged Congress to pass a sentencing reform bill by year’s end.

In a speech to the NAACP’s annual convention, Obama also called for voting rights to be restored to felons who have served their sentences, and said employers should “ban the box” asking job candidates about their past convictions. He said long mandatory minimum sentences now in place should be reduced — or discarded entirely.

“In far too many cases, the punishment simply doesn’t fit the crime,” Obama told a crowd of 3,300 in Philadelphia. Low-level drug dealers, for example, owe a debt to society, but not a life sentence or 20-year prison term, he said.

With his speech to the prominent African-American advocacy group, Obama sought to put a spotlight on the need for new legislation as he mounted a weeklong push on criminal justice reform.

Prosecutors and defense spar over whether theater shooter was sane

CENTENNIAL, Colo. (AP) — James Holmes was legally sane when he entered a packed movie theater armed with an assault rifle, a shotgun and a pistol, intent on killing as many people as he could, a prosecutor told jurors Tuesday in closing arguments at the gunman’s trial.

“That guy was sane beyond a reasonable doubt, and he needs to be held accountable for what he did,” District Attorney George Brauchler said.

But defense lawyer Daniel King countered that Holmes was controlled by his schizophrenia.

“The mental illness caused this to happen. Only the mental illness caused this, and nothing else,” King said.

Brauchler and King made their final appeals to jurors on Tuesday, but it was not clear whether deliberations would begin later in the day or on Wednesday morning.

What does the nuclear deal mean?

Associated Press

What just happened and why is this a big deal?

In general, Iran has agreed to limit its nuclear program if the U.S. and other world powers ease up on what have been brutal economic sanctions against the country.

The 100-page deal caps off more than a decade of diplomatic wrangling aimed at keeping Iran from building a nuclear bomb. U.S. and Israeli officials say a nuclear-armed Iran would be a security disaster and potentially lead to war because of Tehran’s support for anti-Israel militant groups, such as the Palestinian Hamas and the Lebanese Hezbollah group, and frequent references by Iranian leaders to Israel’s destruction.

Iran has long maintained that its nuclear program is peaceful and that it never sought to build a bomb. The talks were mostly considered stalemated until summer 2013, when Iran elected a new president, Hassan Rouhani, who said the country was ready to strike a deal.

The final agreement with Iran was negotiated by U.S., Britain, Germany, France, China and Russia.

What is the agreement?

Iran agreed to reduce the number of uranium-enriching centrifuges it has in stock, as well as its stockpile of enriched uranium. It also has agreed to convert an enrichment site called Fordo — dug deep into a mountainside and thought impervious to air attack — into a research center.

Another key piece is the possibility of inspections: If the U.N. nuclear agency identifies a suspicious site, it can ask to inspect it. And if Iran refuses, an arbitration panel will decide whether the Iranians have to open up the site to inspection within 24 days.

All of this is aimed at slowing down the rate at which Iran could, in theory, build a nuclear weapon.

In exchange, Iran stands to receive more than \$100 billion in assets overseas that had been frozen by other countries. It also will see an end to a European oil embargo and other financial restrictions on its banks. If Iran reneges on its promises, the sanctions will snap back into place.

Every good deal involves compromise. What did the West give up?

Among the biggest concession by the West is that



President Barack Obama delivers remarks in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Tuesday after an Iran nuclear deal is reached.

Iran doesn’t have to submit to international inspections anytime, anywhere. Because the process for inspections could end up with an arbitration panel, access to the Islamic Republic’s most sensitive sites isn’t guaranteed and may be delayed.

And while Iran has to reduce its stockpile of enriched uranium and its number of centrifuges, it doesn’t have to give them up entirely. It also isn’t being forced to close its mountain-side Fordo facility, just use it for research purposes.

Another concern is that a U.N. weapons embargo could lift in five years or sooner if certain criteria are met. U.S. officials had sought to maintain the weapons ban because they worry that once sanctions are lifted and Iran’s government becomes flush with cash again, more military aid would find its way to places like Syria and Yemen. But Iran dug in and was supported by Russia and China, which stand to profit from greater weapons exports.

What does all this mean for oil prices?

Many analysts estimate that Iran has piled up tens of millions of barrels of oil on floating barges that can be exported in fairly short order after sanctions have been lifted. The country will follow that with increased production from its oil fields.

When all this happens and how it ultimately affects the price of oil remain far from certain. Energy prices can depend on production levels in other countries, currency rates and demand sparked by the health of global economies. Plus there are questions about the state of Iran’s oil infrastructure and its ability to increase production.

Despite all the uncertainty, analyst Tom Kloza

expects the lifting of sanctions to help make energy prices next year “more palatable for most of the world.”

What does Israel say? Don't they have the most to gain or lose with this?

Yes, they do, and Israel isn’t happy because the deal basically leaves Iran’s nuclear infrastructure in place. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the agreement a “bad mistake of historic proportion.” President Barack Obama says he sees it differently: If a diplomatic agreement with Iran can’t be found, that puts the next U.S. and Israeli leaders in the position of having to contemplate military action to prevent Iran from building a bomb.

What happens next? Can the U.S. Congress kill the deal?

Congress has 60 days to review the deal. If Congress decides to impose new sanctions or prevent the president from suspending existing ones, that would make it hard for Obama to fulfill the American side of the deal.

To do that, however, Senate and House Republican leaders would have to find enough support to override a presidential veto.

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Many adults spend a considerable portion of their week caring for aging parents, relatives, friends, or other adults. According to the results of a recent study, the stresses and strains of providing care to an ill loved one may take a considerable toll on the mental and physical health of care-givers — including their back and spine health. Learn healthy back habits to keep you safe.

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No matter when the older person’s home was built and regardless of whether it is modern or traditional in style, it likely was designed for young adults and their families. As adults age their homes also grow older, but most are not updated to accommodate the resident’s changing needs. Home adaptation or modification can provide friendlier elder living so older occupants may continue to life safely in the comfort of their home.

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TUESDAY, JULY 28, 3:30 PM

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