

**U.S. seeking death penalty in Charleston church massacre case**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department intends to seek the death penalty against Dylann Roof, the man charged with killing nine black parishioners last year in a church in Charleston, South Carolina, Attorney General Loretta Lynch said Tuesday.

"The nature of the alleged crime and the resulting harm compelled this decision," Lynch said in a brief statement.

Roof is awaiting trial on federal hate crime charges in connection

with the June 17 Emanuel AME Church shooting, which contributed to a national conversation about race relations and ultimately led to the removal of a Confederate battle flag from the grounds of the South Carolina Statehouse.

Roof is also charged in state court with nine counts of murder, and South Carolina prosecutors have already announced plans to seek the death penalty when he stands trial on those charges next year. Solicitor Scarlett Wilson has said she wants her case to be tried first.

Roof, who is white, appeared in photos waving Confederate flags and burning or desecrating U.S. flags, and purportedly wrote of fomenting

racial violence. Survivors told police that he hurled racial insults during the attack. He was arrested a day after the shootings when a motorist spotted his Confederate license plate.

**Native groups protest planned French auction of artifacts**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Native American leaders are protesting the latest plan by a Paris auction house to sell off part of their tribal history, and their demand for the return of their ceremonial objects is getting bipartisan support.

Hundreds of religious items and

art pieces from the Americas, Africa and Asia are scheduled to go up for bidding Monday at Paris' EVE auction house, including a Plains war shirt made with hair from human scalps and sacred Hopi objects that resemble masks and are considered to be living beings by the tribe.

Ahead of the sale, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian held an emergency meeting Tuesday with tribal officials, the State Department and federal Bureau of Indian Affairs. Also at the meeting was U.S. Rep. Steve Pearce, a New Mexico Republican whose proposed resolution urges federal agencies to seek their return.

Pearce also is calling for a study to examine how often these kinds of cultural items fall into the hands of traffickers on the black market.

The Paris auctions have been a diplomatic issue for years between the United States and France, where U.S. laws prohibiting the sale of Native American ceremonial items hold no weight.

"It drives us to tears. It's that upsetting," said Eileen Maxwell, a museum spokeswoman. "It's very frustrating that there is no legal recourse now."

Other objects to be auctioned off include an Acoma Pueblo ceremonial shield, ancient jewelry and effigies linked to the Hohokam.



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