

Archaeologists find ancient mass child sacrifice in Peru

By FRANKLIN BRICENO
Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — Archaeologists in northern Peru say they have found evidence of what could be the world’s largest single case of child sacrifice.

The pre-Columbian burial site, known as Las Llamas, contains the skeletons of 140 children who were between the ages of five and 14 when they were ritually sacrificed during a ceremony about 550 years ago, experts who led the excavation told The Associ-

ated Press on Friday.

The site, located near the modern day city of Trujillo, also contained the remains of 200 young llamas apparently sacrificed on the same day.

The burial site was apparently built by the ancient Chimú empire. It is thought the children were sacrificed as floods caused by the El Niño weather pattern ravaged the Peruvian coastline.

“They were possibly offering the gods the most important thing they had as a society, and the most important thing is children because they

represent the future,” said Gabriel Prieto, an archaeology professor at Peru’s National University of Trujillo, who has led the excavation, along with John Verano of Tulane University.

“Llamas were also very important because these people had no other beasts of burden, they were a fundamental part of the economy,” Prieto said, adding that the children were buried facing the sea, while the llamas faced the Andes Mountains to the east.

Excavation work at the burial site started in 2011, but

news of the findings was first published on Thursday by National Geographic, which helped finance the investigation.

Prieto said that besides the bones, researchers also found footprints that have survived rain and erosion. The small footprints indicate the children were marched to their deaths from Chan Chan, an ancient city a mile away from Las Llamas, he said.

Verano said the children’s skeletons contained lesions on their breastbones, which were probably made by a ceremonial knife. Dislocated ribcages suggest that whoever was performing the sacrifices may have been trying to extract the children’s hearts.



Gabriel Prieto/National Geographic via AP

This 2011 handout photo provided by National Geographic shows more than a dozen bodies preserved in dry sand for more than 500 years, at the Huanchaquito-Las Llamas site near Trujillo, Peru.

Jeffrey Quilter, the director of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology at Harvard University, described it as a “remarkable discovery.”

BRIEFLY

Twin bombings in Afghanistan kill 25

KABUL, Afghanistan — Two Islamic State suicide bombers struck in Afghanistan’s capital on Monday, killing 25 people, including nine journalists who had rushed to the scene of the first attack, in the deadliest assault on reporters since the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

An Agence France-Presse photographer and a cameraman for the local Tolo TV station were among the fatalities, police said. Two reporters for the Afghan branch of Radio Free Europe and a third who was to begin working there soon also were killed, Radio Free Europe said. At least 45 people were wounded in the attacks, according to Kabul police spokesman Hashmat Stanekzai, who said four police were among those killed.

A few hours later, in the southern Kandahar province, a suicide car bomb targeting a NATO convoy killed 11 children from a nearby religious school, police said.

Iran lied about nuclear program says Israel

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel’s prime minister on Monday unveiled what he said was a “half ton” of Iranian nuclear documents collected by Israeli intelligence, claiming it proved that Iranian leaders covered up a nuclear weapons program before signing a deal with world powers in 2015.

In a speech delivered in English and relying on his trademark use of visual aids, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu claimed the material showed that Iran cannot be trusted, and encouraged President Donald Trump to withdraw from the deal next month.

“Iran lied big time,” Netanyahu declared.

In Washington, Trump said it vindicated his past criticism of the nuclear deal.

But Netanyahu’s presentation, delivered on live TV from Israeli military headquarters in Tel Aviv, did not appear to provide evidence that Iran has violated the 2015 deal, raising questions about whether it would sway international opinion ahead of Trump’s decision.

Climate experts seek to make Paris climate deal work

BERLIN (AP) — Diplomats and environmentalists are gathering in Bonn, Germany, to keep working on the rules governing the Paris climate accord.

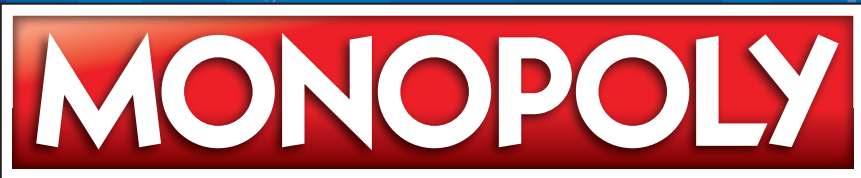
The talks starting Monday are part of preparations for December’s global climate summit in Katowice, Poland, when the so-called Paris rulebook must be formally approved.

Among the unresolved issues are how to ensure transparent monitoring of what countries do to cut global emissions and the methods used take stock of what countries have achieved.

Advocates also want governments at the two-week talks to explicitly acknowledge that current national pledges won’t be enough to keep global warming below 2 degrees Celsius by 2100.



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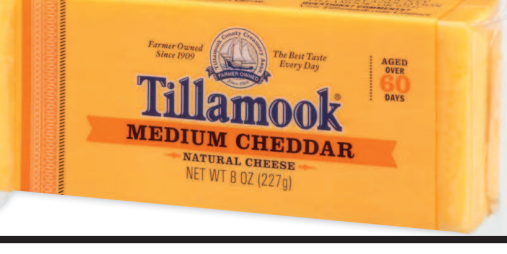


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