

"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

Late Edition

New York: Today, staying mild, some sun, high 60. Tonight, cloudy, light winds, low 48. Tomorrow, limited sun, still mild, high 61. Yesterday, high 64, low 47. Weather map is on Page D7.

VOL. CLVI . . No. 53,777

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NEW YORK, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2006

ONE DOLLAR

HEZBOLLAH HELPS IRAQ SHIITE ARMY, U.S. OFFICIAL SAYS

IRAN SEEN AS FACILITATOR

Between 1,000 and 2,000 Are Said to Have Been Trained in Lebanon

By MICHAEL R. GORDON and DEXTER FILKINS

WASHINGTON, Nov. 27 — A senior American intelligence official said Monday that the Iranian-backed group Hezbollah had been training members of the Mahdi Army, the Iraqi Shiite militia led by Moktada al-Sadr.

The official said that 1,000 to 2,000 fighters from the Mahdi Army and other Shiite militias had been trained by Hezbollah in Lebanon. A small number of Hezbollah operatives have also visited Iraq to help with training, the official said.

Iran has facilitated the link between Hezbollah and the Shiite militias in Iraq, the official said. Syrian officials have also cooperated, though there is debate about whether it has the blessing of the senior leaders in Syria.

The intelligence official spoke on condition of anonymity under rules set by his agency, and discussed Iran's role in response to questions from a reporter.

The interview occurred at a time of intense debate over whether the United States should enlist Iran's help in stabilizing Iraq. The Iraq Study Group, directed by James A. Baker III, a former Republican secretary of state, and Lee H. Hamilton, a former Democratic lawmaker, is expected to call for direct talks with Tehran.

The claim about Hezbollah's role in training Shiite militias could strengthen the hand of those in the Bush administration who oppose a major new diplomatic involvement with Iran.

The new American account is consistent with a claim made in Iraq this summer by a mid-level Mahdi commander, who said his militia had sent 300 fighters to Lebanon, ostensibly to fight alongside Hezbollah. "They are the best-trained fighters in the Mahdi Army," he said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The specific assertions about Iran's role went beyond those made publicly by senior American officials, though Gen. Michael V. Hayden, the director of the Central Intelligence Agency, did tell Congress this month that "the Iranian hand is stoking violence" in Iraq.

The American intelligence on Hezbollah Continued on Page A14

Free or Farmed, When Is a Fish Really Organic?

By ANDREW MARTIN

Buying a pork chop labeled "organic" is relatively straightforward: it comes from a pig that ate only organic food, roamed outdoors from time to time and was left free of antibiotics.

But what makes a fish organic?

That is a question troubling the Agriculture Department, which decides such things. The answer could determine whether Americans will be able to add fish to the growing list of organic foods they are buying, and whether fish farmers will be able to tap into that trend and the profits that go with it.

Organic foods, which many people believe to be more healthful (though others scoff), are grown on farms that shun chemicals and synthetic fertilizers and that meet certain government standards for safeguarding the environment and animals.

An organic tomato must flourish without conventional pesticides; an organic chicken cannot be fed antibiotics. Food marketers can use terms like "natural" and "free range" with some wiggle room, but only the Agriculture Department can sanction the "organic" label.

To the dismay of some fishermen — including many in the Alaskan salmon industry — this means that wild fish, whose living conditions are not controlled, are not likely to make the grade. And that has led to a lot of bafflement, since wild fish tend to swim in pristine waters and are favored by fish lovers.

"If you can't call a wild Alaska salmon true and organic," asked

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Allure of Islam Signals a Shift Within Turkey

Pope's Visit Highlights Tensions With West

By SABRINA TAVERNISE

ANKARA, Turkey, Nov. 27 — A short 24 hours before a visit by Pope Benedict XVI to this Muslim country, its prime minister finally agreed to meet him publicly. The venue: the airport, on the Turkish leader's way out of town.

The elaborate, last-minute choreography pointed to the deep divide that has festered within Turkish society since the foundation of the modern state. Should Turkey face eastward, toward its Muslim neighbors, or westward, toward Europe?

In the past five years, Muslims here have repeatedly felt betrayed by the West. The United States began holding Muslims without charge at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba; it invaded Iraq and abused prisoners at Abu Ghraib. Turkey's hopes of entering the European Union have dimmed. The pope made a speech citing criticism of Islam.

Turkey — a democratic Muslim country with a rigidly secular state — is at a pivot point. It is trying to navigate between the forces that want to pull it closer to Islam and the institutions that safeguard its secularism. Turkey's pro-Islamic government is constrained by rules dictating secularism established by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, Turkey's revered founder.

The extremes jostle on Istanbul's streets, where miniskirts mix with tightly tied head scarves and lingerie boutiques stand unapologetically next to mosques.

"There are two Turkeys within Turkey right now," said Binnaz Toprak, a professor of political science at Bogazici University.

The pope's visit, which begins Tuesday, falls squarely on that fault line, and highlights a slow but steady shift: Turkey is feeling its Muslim identity more and more. The trend worries secular Turkish politicians, who believe the state's central tenet is under threat. In late October, a senior officer of Turkey's army — which ousted a government it saw as overly Islamic in 1997 — issued a rare warning to that effect.

Others say the threat is overstated, but acknowledge that Turks do feel pushed eastward by pressures on their country from America and

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Bloomberg Calls 50 Shots by the Police 'Unacceptable'



James Estrin/The New York Times

At City Hall, center to right: Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Deputy Mayor Dennis M. Walcott and the Revs. Al Sharpton and Herbert Daughtry.

Panel Said to Call for Closing 9 Hospitals in State

By MICHAEL COOPER and SEWELL CHAN

ALBANY, Nov. 27 — A state commission plans to recommend Tuesday closing at least nine hospitals across the state — including five in New York City — and further cutting the state's mounting health care costs by forcing more hospitals to merge or to cut beds, according to several people briefed Monday on the panel's report.

The plan — which is being lauded and dreaded as one of the biggest efforts ever undertaken to overhaul the state's troubled health care system — is an all-or-nothing proposal that will become law unless the State Legislature or Gov. George E. Pataki acts in December to reject it in its entirety. By the law that created the commission, state officials cannot approve some of its recommenda-

tions while rejecting others.

All told, the panel is calling for cutting about 4,100 of New York State's roughly 60,000 hospital beds, according to two people who were briefed on the report and were granted anonymity because the report was not to be released until Tuesday. The panel, the New York State Commission on Health Care Facilities in the 21st Century, was created by state officials to review health care facilities in New York and recommend changes. The state holds the power to decertify hospitals — a potent stick it can wield to enforce compliance.

Five hospitals in New York City are marked to close outright, including two in Manhattan, St. Vincent's Midtown Hospital on West 51st Street and Cabrini Medical Center on East 19th Street; one in Brooklyn, Victory Memorial Hospital; one in the Bronx, New York Westchester Square Medical Center; and one in

Queens, Parkway Hospital.

The current system is beloved by no one. Hospitals complain that they are struggling financially. State officials worry about the growing drain that health care costs place on taxpayer funds. So there has been a widespread recognition — even among union officials — that some hospitals will have to close to allow others to thrive. But closing hospitals can be a politically delicate affair that can arouse neighborhood opposition.

But some officials and others who were briefed on the plan, and who also were granted anonymity, said Monday night that the closings called for by the report were not as drastic as they had feared.

Aides to the governor declined to discuss the report before its release.

While the report speaks of officially closing nine hospitals in the state, they said, several other hospitals would effectively be closed by being forced to shed their beds to become clinics or outpatient facilities. That is the case with a sixth hospital that will effectively close in New

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Appeals for Calm After Convening Black Leaders

By DIANE CARDWELL and SEWELL CHAN

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg convened an extraordinary meeting of black religious leaders and elected officials at City Hall yesterday to calm frayed tempers over the fatal police shooting of an unarmed black man in Queens, calling the circumstances "inexplicable" and "unacceptable."

"It sounds to me like excessive force was used," the mayor said of the conduct of the officers, who fired 50 shots outside a Queens nightclub early Saturday, killing Sean Bell, 23, hours before he was to be wed, and injuring two others. "I can tell you that it is to me unacceptable or inexplicable how you can have 50-odd shots fired."

Mr. Bloomberg made the remarks after meeting with some of the city's most influential black politicians and community leaders, including Representative Charles B. Rangel, the Rev. Al Sharpton and dozens of others.

The mayor's decision to meet with Mr. Sharpton and other black leaders was a stark turnabout from the approach of Mr. Bloomberg's predecessor, Rudolph W. Giuliani, who did not reach out to black leaders in the immediate aftermath of the fatal 1999 shooting of Amadou Diallo, an unarmed African immigrant who died in a hail of 41 police bullets.

Mayor Bloomberg's blunt assessment of events still under investigation was striking, although he took pains to point out that the facts were not all in, saying several times that he did not yet know what happened in the shooting, but that he expected that a grand jury would be impelled by the Queens district attorney, Richard A. Brown.

In a move that suggests the officers feel their actions were justified, the lawyer representing the men said he had contacted Mr. Brown's office and offered to have the officers speak to prosecutors and appear before a grand jury voluntarily without immunity. The police have not released the officers' names, saying

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INSIDE



From left: R.M.J.M. London; Studio Daniel Libeskind; Herzog & de Meuron Architekten

Russia's Window on the West Reaches for the Sky

Under the designs for Gazprom City, a business complex planned for St. Petersburg, the main tower would soar higher than the city's landmarks. Though critics say it will ruin the skyline, Gazprom is likely to get its way. PAGE A4

Bush and Rice Pressing Iraq Diplomatic Effort

President Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice are traveling to Jordan for limited talks that include Iraq's prime minister and several leaders of predominantly Sunni Arab nations, but not the Iranians and Syrians.

An aide to Ms. Rice, Philip D. Zelikow, widely seen as an in-house contrarian and advocate for realpolitik in American diplomacy, announced he is resigning his post as State Department counselor to return to his teaching position at the University of Virginia. PAGE A15

Defeat, but No Dissension

Giants Coach Tom Coughlin appeared to have the support of his immediate boss and his team despite a shocking loss. The Giants, who play Dallas on Sunday, control their play-off fate. SPORTSTUESDAY, PAGE D1

Assembly Lists Pet Projects

Under court order, the New York State Assembly made public its full list of pet projects costing \$85 million a year. But a lawyer said the data was in a cumbersome format that could not be easily analyzed. PAGE B1

Wiretap Program Reviewed

The Justice Department has opened a full review into the legal requirements governing the domestic eavesdropping program. PAGE A19

Atlanta Officers Suspended

Eight police officers were placed on leave in the investigation of the death of an 88-year-old woman, shot and killed in a drug raid. PAGE A16

Bebe Moore Campbell Dies

The best-selling novelist, known for her empathetic treatment of the difficult and intertwined relationship between the races, was 56. PAGE A21

Ford Pledges Assets for Loan

Ford mortgaged many of its major assets in order to raise \$18 billion for restructuring. BUSINESS DAY, PAGE C1

Young and Restless in Russia

Tom Stoppard's "Coast of Utopia" trilogy opens with a pulsating portrait of young idealists. A review by Ben Brantley. THE ARTS, PAGE E1



Sara Krulwich/The New York Times

Watts Changes, And a Mainstay Bids It Farewell

By RANDAL C. ARCHIBOLD

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 27 — The pint-size White Sox beat the A's 6-0, ending the baseball season the other day at Ted Watkins Park in Watts. James Dawson hauled out the trophies and T-shirts and some final words of direction and discipline.

"Win or lose, be sportsmen," Mr. Dawson told the losing players, 11- and 12-year-olds fidgeting with bitterness under his towering gaze. "Nobody is better than anybody. If he strikes you out, he struck you out."

A folding table appeared at home plate, and before handing out the awards — everyone got one — he thanked the players and the coaches and, about himself, offered this: "I have been running this league for five years and I hope to do it for another five years."

This is the same league that one of Mr. Dawson's sons coached in, and it was after a basketball game three years ago that the young man was shot and killed, yet another victim, it seemed, of the neighborhood's persistent violence. So Mr. Dawson's words this month were offered as assurance as much to the club as to himself, for change has come both to Watts and to the Dawsons, now formerly of East 105th Street.

In the neighborhood best known, depending on one's frame of reference, for the 1965 riots or the Watts Towers public art project, black families are moving out and Latinos are moving in, a migration taking place in many other once predominantly black neighborhoods in Los

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NEWS SUMMARY

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