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Saili Ofisa o Fa'atoaga tulaga fa'aletonu ua i ai fa'atoaga i le atunu'u Le Lali



A donation of love, on Valentine's Day:

An employee of Neil's ACE Home Center is seen here beside some of the many large pillows donated by ACE to local Red Cross in its response to victims of Tropical Storm Gita. The ACE in-kind donation, worth \$15,000, was made yesterday and included not only pillows, but also blankets, towels & sheets, quilt sets, tarps, coolers, ACE t-shirts, paint and water.

[photo: Leua Aiono Frost]

ONLINE @ SAMOANEWS.COM

DAILY CIRCULATION 7,000

Underage nephew's "drug" uncle ordered to leave island immediately

by Ausage Fausia
Samoa News Reporter

A 54-year-old uncle who was convicted by the High Court last month of providing drugs to his underage nephew who was a student at Tafuna High School during the time of this incident last year, was ordered by the court to depart the territory and to remain outside of its borders for the period of his probation — which is 10 years.

Galu Nofoa was initially charged together with a co-defendant, Iosefa Alo, a DOE school teacher. They were both charged with one felony count of unlawful distribution of a controlled substance, to wit; methamphetamine, punishable by a term of imprisonment of not more than twenty years and a fine of not more than \$20,000, or both.

However, in a plea bargain with the government, which was accepted by the court early last month, Nofoa pled guilty to the single count of unlawful distribution of a controlled substance, to wit; methamphetamine as charged.

According to his plea of guilt, Nofoa admitted that on the night of Oct. 5, 2017 he gave his nephew some marijuana leaves to smoke. The nephew, who was named in the court affidavit as "J.M." went to school the next morning and took with him marijuana leaves that he had gotten from the defendant, and smoked the leaves on campus with another student, who was named in the court affidavit as "C.K".

J.M. told police that his uncle Nofoa gave him 3 marijuana joints and after school on Oct. 6, 2017, he sold half of a marijuana joint to one of his friends at school, while another friend smoked the remaining half. He then gave the teacher, Alo the other 2 marijuana joints.

On the night of Oct. 6, 2017, Nofoa's co-defendant Alo gave a glass pipe to C.K. loaded with ice and told him to sell it for \$30 cash, or the marijuana joints in return for the ice inside the pipe.

When they arrived at school on the morning of Oct. 7, 2017, C.K. and J.M. smoked the glass pipe with ice behind the cafeteria. A security guard caught them later when they went to

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Gov't issues a reminder — "open burning activities are illegal"

HEALTH HAZARD IS CITED

by Fili Sagapolutele
Samoa News Correspondent

As part of family clean ups around the island, following Tropical Storm Gita's devastation, residents are burning debris — leaves, tree branches and other items — on their properties, with plumes of smoke drifting across the main highway from both sides, causing a driving hazard, as well as the possibility of a health hazard to those with breathing illnesses.

As a result, the government has issued a reminder that "open burning activities are illegal" under local regulations of the American Samoa Administrative Code (ASAC).

Residents burning trash as part of their cleanup began late Saturday afternoon once the storm moved further away, although the storm warning was issued until 11:35p.m.

Along the main road from the Nu'uuli area

to Tafuna, smoke can be seen coming from nearby homes or those further inland. It was also the same in other villages on the western side of Tutuila. At daybreak yesterday, smoke from outdoor burning of trash started.

"There's a lot of debris around our family houses and at this point the only option is burning the debris that can be burnt," said a man, whose family was observed by Samoa News late Monday afternoon burning debris. "Can't dump it elsewhere on our property or anywhere else."

The same was echoed by other residents, who were seen Monday and Tuesday burning what they say is "trash", while plastic and bottles were set aside for the American Samoa Power Authority's trash collection.

Some residents say they have no problem with neighbors burning trash, as they need the clean up done. But at the same time, they are taking the

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DON'T FORGET OUR NATIVE WILDLIFE — THEY NEED HELP TOO

This photo provided by an Ili'ili resident shows a fruit bat "taking a nap" on the branch of one of their papaya trees, 24 hours after Tropical Storm Gita.

With the devastation from the storm of trees and greenery up in the mountains too, bats and birds will be seeking food and shelter closer to homes. Hopefully, like this peacefully sleeping bat — residents will protect them.

[Courtesy photo]



A family in Ili'ili learned after Tropical Storm Gita moved away last Friday afternoon that all kinds of trees blocked their access road and the trees also took down power lines to their house. As of yesterday, the family still has no electricity but is very thankful that there were no injuries or deaths in the two Samoas. [courtesy photo]



COURT BRIEFS

by Ausage Fausia
Samoa News Reporter

LIREN ZHANG A.K.A KEVIN

District Court Judge Fiti Sunia has bound over to the High Court the case against one of the defendants in the Department of Human and Social Services (DHSS) food stamp fraud, after the defendant waived his right to a preliminary hearing (PX) yesterday morning.

Liren Zhang a.k.a Kevin, who is still in custody unable to post his \$450,000 bond appeared in District Court yesterday for his PX; and he is represented by private attorney William R. Olson of the RDA Law Firm, while Assistant Attorney General Robert Morris appeared on the behalf of the government.

When Zhang's case was called, his attorney informed the court that his client wishes to waive his right to a PX, and wanted his case to bound over to the High Court for further proceeding.

Zhang, who is facing 17 criminal counts is scheduled to appear in High Court for his arraignment tomorrow at 9 a.m. before Chief Justice Michael

Kruse.

The alleged fraud at the DHSS was discovered during a review of why funds for the American Samoa Nutrition Assistance Program (ASNAP) for the first quarter of FY 2018 quickly ran out.

According to a court affidavit ANZ bank redeemed \$667,555 more for that period than the amount of food coupons ASNAP issued. According to court documents, a subsequent review by the DHSS and ASNAP management team discovered a high amount of counterfeit ASNAP food coupons redeemed by three ASNAP vendors during that period.

An audit is underway to ascertain the full amount that was redeemed using counterfeit food coupons, according to court documents.

The three named vendors are JFL Malae Store and Fast by Food Mart, both owned by Zhang, and Harbor View Mart, whose owner is not one of the three defendants currently being charged in the alleged fraud case.

The other two co-defendants are Jane Vasa, who is now released from prison by District Court Judge Sunia on her own recognizance to await her sentencing, after she was convicted for misdemeanor stealing, and Vincent Toeava, the son-in-law of the late DHSS Director Taeoafua Dr. Meki Solomon. The latter is facing 19 criminal counts, and is scheduled to appear in District Court this Friday for his PX.

ROPETI MUAO

A 46-year-old man who was accused by the government of using a sharp weapon to cause injuries to the head of a juvenile told the court that the accusation against him was true.

Ropeti Muao was initially charged with felony first degree assault, punishable by life in prison or at least 30 years in jail, but under a plea agreement with the government which was accepted by the High Court yesterday, the defendant pled guilty to second degree assault — which is still a felony — but punishable by no more than 5 years imprisonment, or a fine of not more than \$5,000 or both.

With the guilty plea, the defendant admits that some time on May 4 last year he caused serious injuries to a juvenile by using a 12-inch pair of scissors

to hit the victim's head and neck several times. Muao, who remains in custody at the Territorial Correctional Facility (TCF).

Muao's plea bargain with the government was announced in open court on Aug. 15, 2017, and was put under advisement until Oct. 27 of the same year to await the court's decision whether to accept the plea.

When Muao appeared on Oct. 27, his case was then postponed until a later date, after the court ordered the government to consult with the victim's family about the plea bargain with the defendant.

When the defendant's case was called out yesterday morning, Chief Justice Michael Kruse wanted to know from the government's attorney whether they had consulted with the victim's family about the plea agreement, and if the family agreed to its terms.

Prosecutor Woodrow Pengelly informed the court that the government was able to consult with the victim's family and they had agreed to all the terms and conditions of the plea.

After hearing from the government's attorney, Kruse then accepted the defendant's plea of guilt, and scheduled sentencing for next week Friday. Muao is still in custody unable to post his bond.

ALESANA FERETI

During his initial appearance in District Court this week, 23-year-old Alesana Fereti pled not guilty to two misdemeanor counts of stealing and public peace disturbance. He was released on his own recognizance to await another court appearance, scheduled for next month.

Fereti is accused of stealing a bag containing carpentry equipment from the bed of a pickup truck two weeks ago in Fagaima. A taxi driver, whose taxi was in the area where the alleged incident occurred, witnessed the matter and quickly reported it to police, who were able to apprehend the defendant, along with the bag.

According to court information, police could smell alcohol on the defendant when he was taken into custody. Under the conditions of release set by the court, the defendant is prohibited from consuming alcohol and he is to remain a law-abiding citizen.



American Samoa Government OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT

INVITATION FOR BIDS IFB-033-2018

Issuance Date: February 15, 2018

Closing Date: February 28, 2018

No later than 2:00p.m. (local time)

1. INVITATION

Sealed bids are invited from qualified firms to provide the "Soil Remediation Work for the Fono Building" located in the village of Fagatogo, Territory of American Samoa.

2. RECEIPT & OPENING OF BIDS

Sealed bids will be received by the Chief Procurement Officer, American Samoa Government, Tafuna, American Samoa 96799, until 2:00 p.m. (local time), Wednesday, February 28, 2018 at which time and place the sealed bids will be publicly opened and read.

3. PRE-BID MEETING

A MANDATORY Pre-Bid Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 22, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. at the Office of Procurement Conference Room. Bids will not be accepted from bidders who are not present at the Pre-Bid Meeting.

4. CONTRACT DOCUMENTS

Electronic copies of contract documents, including Plans and Specifications may be examined or obtained at the Office of Procurement free of charge.

5. The American Samoa Government reserves the right not to accept the lowest or any bid.

6. The American Samoa Government reserves the right to waive any informality in bidding as may be in the best interest of American Samoa Government.

DR. ORETA MAPU CRICHTON
Chief Procurement Officer

Equal Opportunity Employer / Affirmative Action

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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EOC UPDATE: For Individual Assistance you don't have to be in an emergency shelter

by Samoa News staffer

Government assessment teams continue their post-storm damage assessments, but reports surfaced late yesterday that people are going to emergency shelters because they think they need to go to a shelter to qualify for Individual Assistance (IA).

But the public is reminded that the IA teams — which are a part of the EOC assessment teams, are only conducting assessments — and applications are not being taken yet.

In the meantime, BoH issued a notice yesterday morning that its Tafuna branch was temporarily closed due to their inability to connect to the telecommunications network as a result of damages caused by the storm.

If telecommunications utility lines were restored sometime yesterday, then the Tafuna branch will open for regular business hours today, Thursday.

BOH customers still have access to their bank accounts via two working ATMs and online services.

Some customers have reported to Samoa News that deposits made to their accounts Monday were still not posted to their bank accounts as of yesterday morning and BoH's customer service center in Honolulu informed one customer that due to technical problems caused by the storm the bank wasn't able to post the deposits right away and technicians were working on resolving these issues.

Samoa News was also told that if 'fees' were incurred due to this issue, BoH would reverse all charges when the bank is up and running again in American Samoa.

EOC STORM UPDATE

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Damage Assessment Teams will continue to conduct assessments in the villages with the help of the village mayors this whole week.

"Your cooperation is encouraged to ensure a more efficient process and in gathering correct information," said EOC in its 11a.m special bulletin yesterday.

- Office of Public Information, KVZK-TV, is still not online or in operation due to lack of or NO power to the transmitter at Mt Alava. There are ongoing efforts with partnering government agencies in restoring power to generators.

- Leone police substation telephone landlines are down, but their electricity is now restored. The public is reminded to exercise safety as you continue damage cleanup. Call 633-1111 to reach all substations or further assistance is needed.

EOC special bulletin issued at 6p.m Tuesday, Feb. 13:

- Health Department's Tafuna health center is open on a 24-hour basis and to call 699-6018 for further information. The Leone and Amouli health clinics are open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Call Amouli clinic at 622-7456 and Leone clinic at 688-7822. The Manu'a health clinics in Ofu and Ta'u remain open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information on all clinics, contact 699-6018.

- There is a total of 965 displaced residents occupying the twelve (12) open shelters consisting of schools and church halls on island.

Report any flooding or landslides to the EOC at 699-3800, or the Police at 633-1111.

French court acquits 1 man, convicts 2 in terror-tied trial

By PHILIPPE SOTTO, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — A French court on Wednesday acquitted a man charged with harboring Islamic extremists after they carried out the 2015 Paris attacks, bringing a surprising end to the first criminal trial linked to the country's deadliest extremist violence since World War II.

The presiding judge said the Paris court found Jawad Bendaoud, a 31-year-old street criminal, not guilty of providing lodging to two of the attackers and helping them hide from police when they were the most-wanted criminals in France.

The court also convicted and sentenced two co-defendants in the case to prison terms Wednesday.

The Nov. 13, 2015, attacks on Paris cafes, the national stadium and the Bataclan concert hall left 130 people dead. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility.

Addressing Bendaoud at a verdict hearing, Judge Isabelle Prevost-Desprez said the evidence was "insufficient to prove your guilt."

"It has not been proven that Jawad Bendaoud provided accommodation to two individuals whom he knew to be terrorists," she said in her ruling.

Bendaoud, standing behind a glass-enclosed dock, raised his fist in victory and blew kisses to the public and his lawyers at the news. He faced up to six years in prison if convicted of harboring terrorists.

Bendaoud denied knowing the identity of the men to whom he rented a small flat in Saint-Denis. One of them was Abdelhamid Abaaoud, the suspected ringleader of the Paris attacks.

Xavier Nogueras, the lawyer for Bendaoud, said he was "extremely moved" that the court found his client innocent.

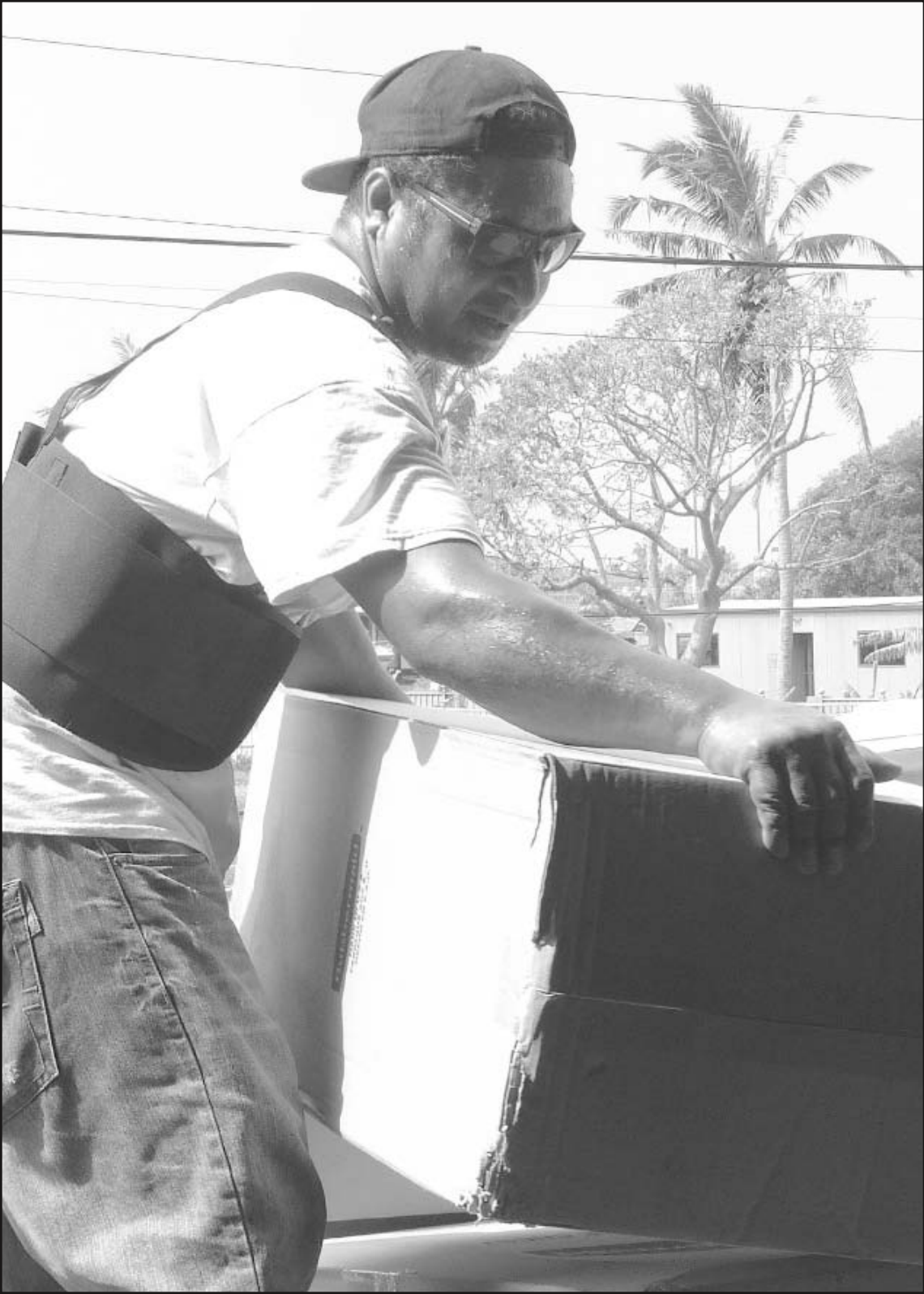
Of his co-defendants, Mohamed Soumah, who was accused of acting as an intermediary with Bendaoud to secure lodging for the two fugitives, received a 5-year prison sentence. Youssef Ait-Boulahcen, who was accused of knowing the extremist's whereabouts and not informing authorities, was sentenced to three years in prison plus another year that was suspended.

Both had denied the accusations.

The Paris prosecutor's office announced it was appealing the whole verdict.

Bendaoud has been imprisoned for 27 months pending his trial. A judicial official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told The Associated Press that Bendaoud was expected to be released shortly. The prosecutor had requested a 4-year prison term for Bendaoud, saying he knew he was giving refuge to criminals.

Surprisingly, Bilal Mokono, a victim who was seriously wounded in the 2015 attack at the national stadium, and Nogueras, the lawyer for Bendaoud, hugged each other after verdict.



An employee of Neil's ACE Home Center off loads one of the boxes of coolers that the company donated to the local Red Cross yesterday to help victims of Tropical Storm Gita.

[photo: Leua Aiono Frost]

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O nei fa'asalalauga i luga o le televise ma le nusipepa, luga o le televise na e saunoa ai fa'apea ua maua le tagata na tafanaina le ta'avale leoleo o ia lea ua masalomia na faia, ma o le gaoioiga a le palaai/cowardly.

Lau susuga i le Komesina Le'i, fa'amolemole taofiofi lou tali atu i le au tusitala. You can always say no comments, pe afai e te silafiaina o oe o le Komesina, ua ia te oe le tofa mamao, o le ta'ita'i o le vaega fa'amalosil tulafono - Public Safety.

Ua e silafia lelei, e le'i amataina se fa'amasinoga ia outou tuuaina, ma masalosologa. E le logo malie saunoaga, fa'amatalaga ma tusitusiga o lo'o aumai e le au tusitala, ona o lau susuga i le ali'i Komesina tusa ai ma le fa'atalatalanoa (interview) a lau susuga.

Upu a le atunu'u, tu'utu'u le upega i le loloto. Ia Le'i Sonny Thompson tu'utu'u lau upega i le loloto ma ia e fagota i le tai loloto ae le o le tai papa'u, ma faifai malie le faiva o tamali'i.

O a'u lenei o le tina o Thomas Siaumau, le tagata ua outou tuuaia i le tafanaina o le ta'avale leoleo.

O lo'o to'a pea le tai ia i ma'ua o matua o Thomas Siaumau, o ona aiga, uo ma pa'aga masani a le atali'i. Ia asu mai le lagi so tatou manuia a'o talia le amataina o le fa'amasinoga o Thomas Siaumau.

[Sainia]
Stella Siaumau

Red Cross disaster workers expected to arrive on island this week

by Fili Sagapolutele
Samoa News Correspondent

More than a dozen American Red Cross disaster workers from the US are expected to arrive on island this week, to assist with the current staff on the ground, as Tutuila is in recovery mode following last Friday's Tropical Storm Gita.

But ahead of the storm, the American Samoa Red Cross American Samoa distributed more than 2,000 emergency supplies — tarps, flashlights, comfort kits, etc. — “and there are additional supplies on the way,” said Emily Cox, the Regional Communications Director of American Red Cross of San Diego/Imperial Counties — including American Samoa.

“We now anticipate having at least 20 Red Cross disaster workers on Friday's flight into the island, including our regional chief executive officer Sean Mahoney,” Cox said yesterday afternoon from San Diego. In addition, seven other volunteers from San Diego and several workers from other parts of the United States are also expected on the flight.

“Once that team is on the ground, they will be able to continue the disaster assessment process

and then open cases for families who had their homes majorly damaged or destroyed,” she told Samoa News.

The Red Cross team from the US joins the local Red Cross disaster workers and at least two other Red Cross workers from San Diego, who are already on island.

According to Cox, the American Red Cross of San Diego/Imperial Counties has eight staff members managing the disaster response from the Disaster Operations Center in San Diego.

She points out that the Red Cross is working very closely with the entire response community — government agencies, other non-profit groups, faith-based organizations, area businesses and others — to coordinate relief and recovery efforts.

To our readers, the Red Cross also has several safety tips available for people on what to do during or after a landslide, flood or power outage — on www.redcross.org

For Mahoney, a retired US Coast Guard captain, this will be his first visit to American Samoa since taking over the CEO post last December. (See Samoa News edition Nov. 16, 2017 for details.)



EPA chief says he flies first class due to security concerns



FILE - In this Sunday, Feb. 11, 2018 file photo, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu chairs the weekly cabinet meeting at the Prime Minister's office in Jerusalem. Israeli media reports Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2018 say police recommending Netanyahu indictment on corruption charges, including bribery.

(Ronen Zvulun, Pool via AP, File)

By MICHAEL BIESECKER,
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The head of the Environmental Protection Agency has broken months of silence about his frequent premium-class flights at taxpayer expense, saying he needs to fly first class because of unpleasant interactions with other travelers.

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt spoke about his flight costs on Tuesday in a pair of interviews in New Hampshire, following a first-class flight to meet with the state's Republican governor and tour a toxic waste site.

Pruitt told the New Hampshire Union Leader he had some

“incidents” on flights shortly after his appointment by President Donald Trump last year.

“We live in a very toxic environment politically, particularly around issues of the environment,” said Pruitt, who confirmed to the newspaper that he had flown first class from Washington to Boston before continuing on to New Hampshire. “We’ve reached the point where there’s not much civility in the marketplace and it’s created, you know, it’s created some issues and the (security) detail, the level of protection is determined by the level of threat.”

Pruitt is the first EPA administrator to have a 24-hour security

detail that accompanies him at all times, even at the agency's headquarters in Washington. He has also taken other security precautions, including the addition of a \$25,000 soundproof “privacy booth” to prevent eavesdropping on his phone calls and spending \$3,000 to have his office swept for hidden listening devices.

Pruitt said he was not involved in the decision for him to fly first class.

“There have been instances, unfortunately, during my time as administrator, as I’ve flown and spent time, of interaction that’s not been the best,” Pruitt told WMUR TV in Manchester, New Hampshire. “And, so,

ingress and egress off the plane ... that’s all decisions all made by our (security) detail team, by the chief of staff, by the administration. I don’t make any of those decisions. They place me on the plane where they think is best from a safety perspective.”

Pruitt was asked about the issue following a Washington Post report on Sunday that detailed some of his travel expenses, including a \$1,641.43 first-class seat for a short flight in June from Washington to New York City. Pruitt's ticket cost six times what EPA paid for his aides seated in coach.

The Associated Press reported in July and again in December that spending on commercial airline tickets purchased for Pruitt indicated he was flying in premium-class seats. EPA's press office has repeatedly refused to comment on whether Pruitt was flying first class.

Federal regulations allow government travelers to fly business class or first class when no cheaper options are “reasonably available” or if there are exceptional security circumstances. However, past federal audits have found that those rules have been routinely violated by high-ranking government officials under both Republican and Democratic administrations.

The use of luxury air travel by members of Trump's Cabinet has been under scrutiny for months, after the resignation of Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price in September following media reports he spent at least \$400,000 in taxpayer funds on private jets for himself and his staff.

A report released Wednesday by the inspector general at the

Department of Veterans Affairs found that Secretary David Shulkin and his staff made “false representations” to justify his wife accompanying him at taxpayer expense on an 11-day European trip that mixed business and sightseeing.

Records show Pruitt has taken at least four flights on non-commercial aircraft, costing more than \$58,000. EPA has said all of those flights were necessary and pre-approved by ethics lawyers.

EPA spokesman Jahan Wilcox did not immediately respond Wednesday to questions about whether Pruitt had been granted similar waivers allowing him to fly premium class or about the past security incidents to which Pruitt referred. Pruitt's frequent government-funded travel, which records show has often included weekend layovers in his home state of Oklahoma, is currently under review by EPA's internal watchdog. The office of EPA Inspector General Arthur Elkins said Wednesday it expects to release the results of its investigation by summer.

Meanwhile, the White House's budget proposal for EPA released earlier this week seeks to cut \$3.7 million, or 9 percent, in funding for Elkins' office. His spokeswoman, Jennifer Kaplan, said that would impair the ability of the inspector general to perform investigations like the one into Pruitt's spending.

“Without sufficient resources, we would not be able to take on many discretionary audits and investigations that the OIG believes yield considerable value and return on investment,” Kaplan said.

US DOJ denies Maoputasi County claim for share of ASG's portion of StarKist civil penalty

by Fili Sagapolutele
Samoa News Correspondent

The US Justice Department disagrees with Paramount Chief Mauga T. Asuega's request for Maoputasi County to get a share of what ASG is proposed to receive in a civil penalty to be paid by StarKist Co., for violating federal and local environmental laws in territorial waters.

"Since the American Samoan Code [Annotated] is insufficient to provide the [Maoputasi] County with the legal right to seek civil penalties, the United States is not authorized to share penalties with the County," said Henry S. Friedman, assistant chief of Environmental Enforcement Section of USDOJ in court filings.

Under the proposed Consent Decree reached Dec. 22, 2017, the defendants — StarKist Co., and StarKist Samoa — will pay \$6.5 million in a civil penalty, with \$2.6 million to ASG and \$3.9 million to the federal government.

The Decree, subject to court approval, stems from a second Amended Complaint filed by the feds, along with ASG, against the plaintiffs. The case is before the federal court in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

A 30-day public comment period, which commenced on Jan. 2, 2018, followed after all parties agreed to the Decree. On Monday this week, the USDOJ filed a memorandum supporting the Decree and for the court to approve

it. Among documents in USDOJ's filing were public comments received during the comment period and one of them was submitted by Mauga, who "notes, with satisfaction, the recognition of the harm caused by the violations and approves of the specific remedial directives."

(Local attorney Charles Alailima, who submitted the written comments, represents Mauga.)

However, Mauga requested that the USDOJ consider the portion of the civil penalty being paid to the American Samoan government be divided "equally between" ASG — which has overall responsibility for enforcement of environmental laws in the Territory — and Ma'oputasi County Council, "which is specifically charged by statute with the supervision of the cleanliness of the specific county that has been directly affected by these StarKist violations."

The statute cited by Mauga is a provision of ASCA 5.0204: "County Councils shall be chosen in accordance with Samoan custom, 'and shall be charged especially with the supervision of the cleanliness of the county', planting of the lands, making and clearing of goads, and all matters of a local nature concerning the county."

Furthermore, similar Village Council responsibility within their village boundaries is found in ASCA 5.0305(a).

According to the Paramount Chief, the inclusion of the Ma'oputasi County Council as a part of this settlement would

have "an extremely positive effect for the future enforcement of the federal interest in maintaining the environmental quality of the Pago Harbor."

"It would encourage traditional chiefs and families of the Ma'oputasi villages to educate themselves in environmental laws that protect them directly and enlist their support in monitoring the harbor and promptly reporting violations to the appropriate ASG and federal agencies," Mauga stated.

Furthermore, it would also make potential polluting industries and operators within Pago Harbor aware that their operations are being monitored for compliance with local and federal EPA laws, not just by faraway federal agencies or understaffed and often times conflicted ASG agencies, but by the entire community surrounding them.

Mauga recommended that portion of the settlement award to his county should stipulate that funds be used to undertake statutory responsibilities under ASCA 5.0204 and ASCA 5.0305(a).

USDOJ'S REPLY

In USDOJ's 21-page memorandum, Friedman noted that the feds are "very mindful of the Paramount Chief's statements about the importance of the County Councils" within the territory and also carefully considered his request.

Friedman explained that USEPA's Penalty Policy allows for dividing penalties with state and local governments under certain circumstances, as

this encourages these governments to develop and maintain active enforcement programs and also fosters federal and state and local cooperation in environmental enforcement.

Additionally, dividing the StarKist penalty between the United States and ASG is fully consistent with the goals of the USEPA Penalty Policy.

However, he said that the United States' policies governing penalty sharing explicitly require, as a predicate to penalty sharing with a state or local government that the government must have and must assert an independent claim that supports its right to civil penalties.

He contends that ASCA 5.0204 — the statute cited by Mauga "does not provide authority for the County to bring civil claims for environmental violations." And since the statute is insufficient, sharing of the penalty is not permitted.

According to the USDOJ, Consent Decree serves the purposes and goals of the operative statutes by reducing water pollution, minimizing risks of releases of hazardous air pollutants and oil to waters, and ensuring that the StarKist facility will remain in compliance with these statutes for the foreseeable future.

"It does so without the need for costly and time-consuming litigation," it says, adding that the Decree encourages voluntary settlement and provides a "speedy and reasonable remedy for the dispute."



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Pacific Island News in Brief



One of many homes destroyed by Cyclone Gita in Tonga

compiled by Samoa News staff

CYCLONE GITA: EMERGENCY SHELTERS REACH TONGAN VILLAGES

Tonga’s disaster authorities say good progress is being made getting emergency shelter out to the remote villages lashed by Cyclone Gita.

Over 1000 homes were damaged or destroyed when the category 4 cyclone hit Tonga’s main island of Tongatapu four days ago.

Graham Kenna of the National Emergency Management Office said the Tongan armed forces had done a fantastic job clearing roads.

He said people in the com-

munity were also clearing up rubbish and debris as quickly as possible.

“This morning, despite heavy rain there’s been ongoing fast response distributions of emergency shelter to the villages on the eastern side of Tongatapu and the western side. And also the Tonga Red Cross is doing shelter distributions within the capital. Its going very smoothly and very quickly. We hope to have most of it finished by lunch time tomorrow.”

Mr Kenna said there had been some welcome rain to fill tanks.

He said it could take up to a month to reconnect electricity to all areas.

(Source: RNZI)

FIJI RELIEF SUPPLIES LOADED FOR LAU ISLANDS

Fiji’s National Disaster Office says two government vessels are on standby ready to take vital water and food supplies to cyclone survivors in Fiji’s southern Lau group.

Initial reports showed 26 homes were partially damaged and 10 had been destroyed on the islands of Ono-i-Lau and Vatoa. Almost 300 evacuees were in five evacuation centres on the islands. The Australian Defence Force completed an aerial survey yesterday and data from that is being used for the response.

The office’s director Anare Leweniqila said the most immediate needs are food and water and his team are now working out how much is needed.

“So that is what the assessment teams will determine when they visit the islands. They will go by government vessels, we have two ready on standby, once we finalise the plans and everything then they will be departing.”

Mr Leweniqila said no casualties or injuries had been reported so far and he’s commended people’s preparedness.

He said they had put into action the lessons learnt from past disasters like Cyclone Winston which hit Fiji’s main islands almost exactly two years ago. (Source: RNZI)

NZ SENDS DISASTER RELIEF SUPPLIES TO TONGA

More than 12 tons of aid and disaster relief supplies from New Zealand will touch down on a Defence Force Hercules plane in Tonga this week.

The New Zealand Defence Force said agriculture tool kits, family hygiene kits, collapsible water containers, tarpaulins, generators and chainsaw packs were all on board.

Air Commodore Kevin McEvoy said he hoped the supplies would provide basic power, water and sanitation for people.

He said there was also equipment to clear fallen trees.

Most of Tonga remained without power and running water in the wake of Gita.

Derek Leonard owns and runs a coffee plantation in Veitongo - a small rural village in the middle of Tongatapu.

He said some small local shops had been demolished and many houses around him had lost roofs.

He said he was also dealing

with the devastation of his home and property.

“My drying shed is pretty much wrecked and a a lot of plants - whole lot of my crops, all of my shelter belt and half the trees are just demolished.”

Mr Leonard said three days on, he still didn’t have power or running water and has been non-stop cleaning.

(Source: RNZI)

PRISONS MUM ON DRUGS PROBE

The Samoa Prisons and Correction Services has declined to comment on an investigation by the Police regarding drugs being smuggled into the prison.

Responding to questions from the Samoa Observer, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Ulugia Niuia Aumua said they would rather focus on maintaining the security of the Prison at Tafa’igata.

Earlier this week, Police Superintendent and Media Spokesperson, Auapa’au Logoitino Filipo, confirmed that investigations over claims that drugs, mainly marijuana, are being sold inside the Tafa’igata Prison are underway.

The investigation follows a failed plot by prisoners to stage a mass prison break while the nation was preparing for Tropical Cyclone Gita on Friday.

The plan was apparently concocted by the senior hierarchy among the prisoner population, the Samoa Observer was told.

Police were tipped off and 90 officers turned up at the Prison.

“During the raid, marijuana joints and a stash of cash were discovered,” Auapa’au said. “The Police are now investigating the discovery.”

(Source: Samoa Observer)

YOUNG WOMAN ATTACKED AND KILLED IN TONGA IN WAKE OF GITA

Police in Tonga are dealing with the alleged murder of a young woman in the wake of Cyclone Gita.

Matangi Tonga reports an 18-year-old man has been charged with the murder of an 18-year-old woman.

It’s alleged he assaulted her with a machete on a road in Nuku’alofa the day after Cyclone Gita hit the capital.

The website reports police said the accused and deceased were in a relationship and had one child together.

The accused was allegedly intoxicated when he saw the victim walking with other people after swimming at a public pool on Vuna Road at Ma’ufanga.

A police spokesperson said the woman died on the spot.

An investigation is underway into the circumstances but it is alleged that jealousy might have been involved.

(Source: RNZI)



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► Underage...

Continued from page 1

smoke a cigarette behind the school’s campus.

C.K. told police that when they were transported to the Tafuna Sub-Station, he saw his friend J.M. hide a marijuana joint in the rear pocket of the passenger seat. Police searched the unit and discovered a small clear baggie with one hand-rolled cigarette inside, along with a lighter and rolling papers.

When asked by police, J.M. stated that he bought marijuana joints from his uncle Nofoa, and it had been two weeks since he started selling marijuana joints at school because he needed money for his business math class. He further explained that he would get a handful of loose marijuana from his uncle, and he would then roll it into marijuana joints and sell it on campus to other students.

Nofoa admitted that he used to sell marijuana when he had a plant growing near his house in Futiga. He further admitted that he remembered giving his nephew J.M. marijuana joints a few times, when J.M. would come with money saying it was someone’s else money.

During his sentencing, Nofoa apologized to the court for his actions and requested a chance to go back home to care for his children and family.

His attorney, Public Defender Douglas Fiaui told the court that his client is a suitable candidate for a probated sentence, because he has no prior record, he quickly admitted to his crime, and he also feels remorse for what he did. With Nofoa’s valid Immigration status, Fiaui asked the court to allow his client to remain in the territory and care for his family.

Prosecutor Christy Dunn on the other hand asked the court to order the defendant to depart the territory and remain outside of its borders for the period of his probation. Dunn said the seriousness the defendant’s action was he provided drugs to a minor. Chief Justice Michael Kruse stated that the conviction against Nofoa pertains to the distribution of the controlled substance, an offense that is very serious to the Fono, which has provided the penalty of imprisonment of not more than twenty years and or a fine of not more than \$20,000, or both.

He noted that the court has taken into account all the mitigating factors about the case, the defendant’s apology, counsels’ arguments and the fact that the defendant is a first offender.

“The other side of the scale as highlighted by the government is the fact that the victim was a minor, and the court by extension in looking at the facts provided to us by the Probation Office tells the story and a quick conclusion that the victims in this case are in fact school children,” Kruse said.

The court then sentenced Nofoa to a term of imprisonment of ten years and a fine of \$5,000. Execution of sentence was suspended and the defen-

dant was placed on probation for a period of ten years under certain conditions.

The defendant has to serve a period of detention of 40 months at the Territorial Correctional Facility (TCF) without release whatsoever, except for medical emergency or genuine orders of the court. However, execution of the period of detention is stayed and the defendant is ordered to immediately depart the territory and remain outside of its borders for the period of his probation. The court orders that Nofoa be released to the Probation Office, and they’re responsible for transporting him to an exit point — the airport or the wharf. Kruse also ordered that a copy of the court’s judgment and sentence be served to the Immigration Office, to make sure the defendant’s name be put on their “Lookout List”.

Chief Associate Judge Mamea Sala Jr. and Associate Judge Paeapae Iosefa Faiai assisted Kruse in handling down Nofoa’s sentence.



Stacks of cases of bottles of water donated by Neil’s ACE Home Center to the local Red Cross in its response to victims of Tropical Storm Gita is seen here during delivery to the Red Cross center in Tafuna, across from McDonald’s. Their total donation in-kind is worth \$15,000.

[photo: Leua Aiono Frost]

TEAM MELEKE ESSAY CHALLENGE

Meleke Faitala Bowles was an amazing woman who was always full of love. In 2014, Meleke was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer. This was shocking news because she did not smoke and lived a healthy lifestyle. We realized how little we knew about lung cancer and recognized the importance of simply being aware of the symptoms. Meleke made her way to heaven on February 26, 2016. We hope the Team Meleke Essay Challenge inspires a young man or woman to spread lung cancer awareness and to support the fight against this devastating disease.

The Essay Topic: Essay must be a research paper on lung cancer or a personal story of how lung cancer has affected you.

Writing Requirements:

- APA style
- Word limit: 750 – 1,000
- A minimum of 2 references
- One of the references must be from www.lungforce.org

Eligibility for entry:

- Must be a resident of American Samoa
- Must be in Grade 11 or 12 (Juniors and Seniors)

Submit your essay to: Team.Meleke@gmail.com on or before **FEBRUARY 26, 2018.**

Winner will be announced on March 9, 2018.

WINNER WILL RECEIVE \$500.00 from Team Meleke



Neil's ACE Home Center employees with local Red Cross workers yesterday at the Red Cross in Tafuna, where ACE donated a \$15,000 worth of supplies to Red Cross to help after Tropical Storm Gita. Among the many donated items are pillows, blankets, towels & sheets of all sizes, quilt sets, tarps, coolers and paint.

[photo: Leua Aiono Frost]

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Saili Ofisa o Fa’atoaga tulaga fa’aletonu ua i ai fa’atoaga i le atunu’u

tusia Ausage Fausia

O lo o fa’agasolo i le taimi nei se suesuega faapitoa a le Matagaluega o Fa’atoaga a le malo, i le taumafai lea e saili le tulaga tonu ua i ai tulaga o fa’atoaga ua afaina i le malolosi o matagi mai le ‘afa o Gita lea na a’afia ai le atunu’u i le fa’aiuga o le vaiaso na te’a nei.

I se fa’atalatalanoaga ma le Fa’atonusili o le Ofisa o Fa’atoaga i le vaiaso nei, na fa’amaonia mai ai e le susuga Filifa’atali Michael Fuiava le mae’a lea ona tofia o sana vaega faapitoa e fa’atinoina lenei asiasiga.

“E to’alua vaega mai lo’u Ofisa lea ua mae’a ona tofia latou te fa’atinoina le asiasiga i le motu atoa, ona e fia iloa poo le a le aofa’i o fa’atoaga ua faaleagaina i le atunu’u. O fa’atoaga o le a asia i lenei vaiaso e aofia ai fa’atoaga tetele faapea ai ma tama’i fa’atoaga o lo o toto i tua o maota ma laoa o aiga uma o le atunu’u”, o le saunoaga lea a Filifa’atali.

“Afai ae mae’a ona faia lenei asiasiga, ona tu’u fa’atasia lea o se matou ripoti ma le fa’amoemoe e auina atu i Ta’ita’i o le malo”.

“O le a matou fesiligia fo’i Kamupani ma pisinisi tetele o lo o aumaia fualaau aina i le atunu’u, poo le a le tele o a latou sapalai o lo o i ai, ae poo i ai fo’i ni a latou sapalai o aga’i mai i se taimi o i luma, ina ia fuafua i ai le umi e mafai ona tua atu i ai le atunu’u mo le fofoga taumafa. Afai loa ae mae’a ona tu’u fa’atasia uma nei ripoti, ona tu’u aloaia atu ai loa lea o le matou ripoti faai’u i le Ofisa a le Feterale o lo o gafa ma fesoasoani mo lenei fa’alavelave (FEMA), ina ia mafai ai ona maua mai se fesoasoani mo le fofoga taumafa o le atunu’u”, o le saunoaga lea a Fuiava.

Na maua le avanoa e faatalatalanoa ai e le Samoa News ni isi o le mamalu o le aufai faatoaga i le atunu’u, i ni o latou finagalo e tusa ai o le oge lea o le a aga’i atu i ai le atunu’u, e mafua mai ina ua faaleagaina uma faatoaga e pei o fa’i, taro ma ulu i le ‘afa o Gita.

Na taua e ni isi o le aufai fa’atoaga e fa’apea, ua tatau ona amata galulue aiga o le atunu’u e toto loa le fa’i ma le taro, ina ia mafai ona tua i ai le atunu’u i le fofoga taumafai i le isi 5 i le 6 masina o lo o lumana’i nei.

(Faaauau itulau 11)



O le pulega a le Neil’s ACE Home Center ma le pulega fo’i a le Koluse Mumu ua latou fefa’asoa’i i le agalelei ua fa’ao’o ane e le ACE mo i latou i lenei aso, e auala ai le latou fesoasoani i le mamalu o aiga pagatia o le atunu’u ona o le ma’ema’ea o Gita i lenei tausaga.

[ata: Leua Aiono Frost]





Fish and Chips

Junior Carl Cod Fish with Cheese

Carls Catch Battered Pollock Sandwich

Carls Catch Delux Sandwich with Swiss Cheese

Lent Season







O le taua’aoina aloaia o le Iugafono Malilie fa’atasi a Maota e lua o le Fono Faitulafono e taualoa ai le tautua matavala a le Faletupe o Hawaii i le teao ananafi. O le failautusi o le Senate Leo’o Va’a Ma’o sa fai ma sui o le Fono na te fa’atinoa lea tiute taua, ma sa ia taua’aoina i le Sui Peresetene BOH ae o le Pule o le Lala o le BOH i Amerika Samoa, EJ Tyler Ozu sa ia taliaina ma le fa’aaloalo lea fa’ailo taua.

[ata: Leua Aiono Frost]



O le taimi ua tau amata ona fa’avasega galuega ma le pitola’au e tau’ave e sui volenitia a le Koluse Mumu. Fa’atonuga tima’i muamua, ia fa’álogo taliga ae feoa’i vae i le fela’ua’iga o pusa oloa uma ua tapena mai i ai le latou Manamea o le 2018, Neil’s ACE Home Center.

[ata: Leua Aiono Frost]



O le va’aiga i le pisi o nai kuka e fa’aaoga le taimi ua fa’avela ai le tausamiga o le Aoauli a Nofoa’iga o lo’o tausia fa’apitoa ai le mamalu o le atunu’u ua fa’aleagaina fale e tapena ai sipuni ma tui ma pepa solo mo le ‘aiga o le afiafi. Malo le galulue, e le vale fo’i lo outou tau.

[ata: Leua Aiono Frost]

Molia se ali’i i lona fa’apapa o se fana i le po o le Super Bowl

tusia Ausage Fausia

O le vaiaso nei lea na pu’e fa’apagota ai e Leoleo se ali’i ma molia i molia o le umia faasolitulafono o se a’upega, e mafua mai i le fa’alavelave lea ua molia ai o ia i lona fa’apapa o se fana i fafo o se fale kalapu i le po o le Aso Sa o le vaiaso i ona tua atu, le po tonu lava lea na sailia ai le siamupini o le ta’aloga o le Super Bowl.

O le aso Lua na te’a nei na tula’i ai Hapakuki Fotuauka i luma o le Fa’amasinoga Fa’aitumalo mo le ulua’i taimi, ma fa’atulaga ai e le afioga i le ali’i Fa’amasino ia Fiti Sunia le tupe e \$10,000 e totogi ona fa’atoa mafai lea ona tatata o ia i tua e fa’atalitali ai taulumaga o lana mataupu.

Na faamaonia mai e se molimau i le Samoa News, ua mae’a nei ona tatata i tua le ua molia ina ua ia totogi le tupe sa faatutaga e tatata ai o ia i tua, i lalo o tuutuuga e ao ona ia usitai i ai. O ni isi o ia tuutuuga e aofia ai le faasa lea ona ia toe umia se a’upega mata’utia poo fualaa fa’asaina, fa’asa ona ia taumafai e fa’afesootai molimau a le malo, fa’asa fo’i ona ia toe soli se tulafono i soo se taimi.

O le vaiaso fou lea ua fa’atulaga e toe tula’i ai le ua molia i luma o le Fa’amasinoga Faaitumalo mo le isi ana iloiloga.

O lenei mataupu na tofu atu i le Ofisa o Leoleo, ina ua faila e le na a’afia sana tagi fa’asaga ia Fotuauka, i lona fa’apapa lea o se fana i luga o le ea i fafo o se fale kalapu i Tafuna i le po o le aso e pei ona taua.

E vaiaso atoa o galulue Leoleo mo le tau sailia o le tusi saisai mai le fa’amasinoga, ma latou pu’e fa’apagota ai loa le ua molia i le afiafi o le aso Gafua na te’a nei.

Na taua e ni molimau i Leoleo lo latou vaaia o le ua molia ua aga’i atu i totonu o lana ta’avale sa paka i fafo o le fale kalapu, ma ia aumai ai le fana ma fa’apapa i luga o le ea. Ina ua mae’a ona pu’e fa’apagota e Leoleo le ua molia, sa latou aga’i atu ai loa ma sailia lona fale ma maua ai se fana.

Na taua e le to’alua a le ua molia i le Samoa News lona le fiafia tele i le auala na fa’atinoina ai e Leoleo le pu’e fa’apagota o lona to’alua. Na taua e le Tina e fa’apea, na fa’ateia i latou a o malaga i luga o le auala ma lona to’alua ma le la tama pepe e 4 tausaga ina ua taofi fa’afuase’i le latou ta’avale e ni ta’avale a Leoleo, ma tau fai ta’i atu ai fana a Leoleo i le latou ta’avale.

Sa ia taua le fefe o si ana tama i lea taimi, ma ua avea ai ma tulaga ua popole ai lava le loto o lana tama, ma i’u ina ia tu’u fesili ai pe aisea na o atu ai Leoleo e fana lona Tama. Na taua e le Tina e fa’apea, sa le tata lava ona fa’atinoina e Leoleo nei ituaiga gaioiga a o la i ai ma lana tama i totonu o le ta’avale. Sa fiu fo’i e ee atu i Leoleo o lo o i ai lana tama i totonu o le ta’avale, ae sa fa’aauau pea ona ta’i atu fana a Leoleo i le ta’avale.

Na faamaonia e le Tina lo latou aga’i atu ma Leoleo ma su’e lo la fale, ma maua ai e Leoleo se fana o lo o teu malu i totonu o le fale.

► Gov’t...

Continued from page 1

precaution of making sure that young children don’t get close to areas where neighbors are burning their trash.

In its daily post-storm special bulletin, issued after 6p.m., Tuesday, the Emergency Operation Center reminded residents of local regulation (ASAC 24.0512 - Open Burning), which makes it illegal when it comes to “open burning activities.”

According to EOC, smoke and fumes from open burning activities may cause health issues especially for the elderly, infants/children and those with respiratory illnesses.

Residents are asked to place household trash — plastics, cans, bottles, Styrofoam, papers, carpet, rubber materials, etc. — in bins and trash cans for proper disposal.

“Tree leaves should be accumulated in a remote area on your property for composting which can later generate fertile soil for planting,” EOC said. “Tree branches can be used as fire wood for outdoor cooking purposes.”

According to the bulletin, you can report open burning

activities to the EOC 699-3800 or AS-EPA 633-2304, 733-6149,

In its daily storm restoration update, ASPA said the Futiga Landfill is Open and “a designated area for all green waste has been secured.”

Asked for clarification on what is considered “green waste”, ASPA managing director Paul Young responded, “trees and plants only.”

ASPA also says that the Futiga Scrap Metal Yard is open for the public to dispose scrap metal wastes only; and Municipal Solid Waste Collectors (contractors) are continuing with their collections (for bins and containers), as per route schedule.

As of 6p.m. Tuesday, all ASPA Feeders — Primary lines — are energized except for areas where power poles and lines are down, according to ASPA, adding that a total of 8,400 out of 12,000 (70%) customers have power now.

For water service, ASPA says a total of 9,312 out of 9,600 (97%) customers have water now.

Suspect’s ‘disturbing’ social media posts being dissected

By KELLI KENNEDY, Associated Press

PARKLAND, Fla. (AP) — The suspect in a deadly rampage at a Florida high school is a troubled teenager who posted disturbing material on social media before the shooting spree that killed at least 17 people, according to a law enforcement official and former schoolmates.

Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel said the 19-year-old suspect, Nikolas Cruz, had been expelled from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School for “disciplinary reasons.”

“I don’t know the specifics,” the sheriff said.

However, Victoria Olvera, a 17-year-old junior, said Cruz was expelled last school year after a fight with his ex-girlfriend’s new boyfriend. She said Cruz had been abusive to his girlfriend.

School officials said Cruz was attending another school in Broward County after his expulsion.

Broward County Mayor Beam Furr said during an interview with CNN that the shooter was getting treatment at a mental health clinic for a while, but that he hadn’t been back to the clinic for more than a year.

“It wasn’t like there wasn’t concern for him,” Furr said.

“We try to keep our eyes out on those kids who aren’t connected ... Most teachers try to steer them toward some kind of connections. ... In this case,

we didn’t find a way to connect with this kid,” Furr said.

Israel said investigators were dissecting the suspect’s social media posts.

“And some of the things that have come to mind are very, very disturbing,” he added without elaborating.

Daniel Huerfano, a student who fled Wednesday’s attack, said he recognized Cruz from an Instagram photo in which Cruz posed with a gun in front of his face. Huerfano recalled Cruz as a shy student and remembered seeing him walking around with his lunch bag.

“He was that weird kid that you see ... like a loner,” he added.

Dakota Mutchler, a 17-year-old junior, said he used to be close friends with Cruz but hadn’t seen him in more than a year following his expulsion from school.

“He started progressively getting a little more weird,” Mutchler said.

Mutchler recalled Cruz posting on Instagram about killing animals and said he had talked about doing target practice in his backyard with a pellet gun.

“He started going after one of my friends, threatening her, and I cut him off from there,” Mutchler said.

“I think everyone had in their minds if anybody was going to do it, it was going to be him,” Mutchler said.



tusia: Leua Aiono Frost

IUGAFONO A LE FONO FAITULAFONO FA’AMALO FALETUPE BOH

O le taeao ananafi na o’o atu ai le Failautusi a le Sanete o le Fono Faitulafono, Leo’o Va’a Ma’o, e taua’ao aloa’ia le Iugafono Malilie Fa’atasi a Maota e lua, e taualoa ai le tautua matavela a le Faletupe o Hawaii i malo o Amerika Samoa fa’apea ma ona tagatanu’u uma.

O lea feiloa’iga aloaia a Leo’o ma le pule o le BOH i Amerika Samoa, EJ Tyler Ozu, o le Sui Peresetene o le Faletupe o Hawaii ma o le Pule fo’i o le BOH i Amerika Samoa nei.

“Ona o se taimi ua fa’atali ai pea lenei faletupe seia maua se isi faletupe e fa’aoga e le Malo o Amerika Samoa ma ona tagatanu’u, o lea ua alagatatau ai fo’i lenei iugafono malilie fa’atasi. Peita’i, o le tautua fo’i e le’i fa’ataga faia, ae na iloga ona fesoasoani fo’i le Faletupe o Hawaii ina ia fautuaina ta’ita’i o le faigamalo a Amerika Samoa ae maise o ona tagata lautele i lea fo’i tautua o lo’o latou tautuaina ai le atunu’u.”

Sa fa’ailoa e Leo’o ia Ozu, “O le amana’ia o le fa’atagi a le malo tou te fa’atalia se’i mae’a ona fa’atulaga se si auunaga fa’afaletupe mo le malo lenei ma ona tagata, o se fa’aaloalo ua sili ona maua lea ua outou faia mo i matou uma. Fa’afetai mo lo outou galulue ma le fa’amaoni i le tausiga o le tamaoiga mo Amerika Samoa ma ona tagata.”

“O lenei fa’ailo maua lea ua fa’atino e le Fono Faitulafono a le Malo o Amerika Samoa, e le o se fa’ailo lea mo outou ia outou tula’i ese ai, ae o se fa’afetai maua lea ona o lo outou fa’amaoni i le galuega fa’afaletu’oa, ma lo outou agalelei e fa’atino ai le tautua mo i matou, ae le o matou loto ina ia outou tula’i, e mo’omia pea lava outou,” o Leo’o lea.

Ina ua fesiligia Ozu, pe mata o le a tula’i ese ae le toe tatalaina o latou faitoto’a e tautua ai le atunu’u, ae fa’ailoa mai, “E leai, o lo’o i ai mea e ao ina fa’amautaina atili. O lo’o to’atele lava e le’i tapunia a latou teugatupe i le matou faletupe, ae le’i fa’ao’o maia fo’i se tala mai le fa’aululuga o le BOH i Hawaii i se aso e ao ina fa’amuta ai le tautua i laufanua o le tatou nei teritori.”

FOA’I ‘NIEL’S ACE HOME CENTER’ - \$15,000 O OLOA MO AIGA MAFATIA

Ona o Fepuari 14 i tausaga ta’itasi o le aso mo Manamea, ua filifilia ai e le Neil’s ACE Home Center le Koluse Mumu i Amerika Samoa e fai ma latou Manamea. O le latou foa’i ua faia mai i le taumafaiga a le Koluse Mumu e tali atu i le tele o aiga na sulufa’i atu mo se fesoasoani, e \$15,000 le tau aofai o oloa e aoga mo le tausiga o aiga ua foa’ia mai.

O oloa e aofia ai: Aluga fou ma le mafiafia, ie afu, solo ta’ele, ie ufi moega, kapoleni, suavai mama mo le taumafa, ma kula fo’i e teuina i ai mea’ai fulisa a aiga, ua matua utaina i le taeao ananafi i loli la’u oloa e lua a le ACE.

“O lenei foa’i e matua talia ma le fa’afetai tele, aua o lea fo’i fa’ato’a matou mauaina lea o se foa’i fa’apenei mai le aufaipisinisi a le atunu’u talu mai ona lutia i tatou i le Asiosio o Gita, fa’afetai tele Ace i le tou pulega ma le aufaiga-

luega uma, o le aiga fo’i e ona lenei faleoloa, ia fa’amanuia le Atua ia te outou uma i le agalelei ma le alolofa fa’amaoni i o tatou tagata ua pagatia i lenei vaitau. Foa’i e le Atua mau i la outou pisinisi,” o se tala lea a le ali’i pule i le faleteuoa a le Koluse Mumu, le susuga Lipea.

O le susuga a Opeti, o se tasi o Floor Managers a le ACE na malaga mai ma le foa’i, sa ia fofogaina le latou fesoasoani i le aufaigaluega uma a le Koluse Mumu sa latou talia lenei foa’i taua tele.

E tusa ai ma se lipoti ua mae’a fa’amaumauina, i tagata lava ua o’o ane i le Ofisa o le Koluse Mumu, i le taimi nei ua silia ma le 700 aiga ua mae’a fa’atunu a latou pepa ma fa’atalia le taimi e o’o atu ai le asiasiga i tua i o latou afio’aga.

“E leai se mea e popole ai le tatou atunu’u mamalu ae maise o nai aiga o lo’o tausia fa’apitoa i nofoaga ua fa’avasega e le Malo mo lea fa’amoemoe, e o’o atu lava le asiasiga a le Koluse Mumu i o outou lotoifale. O mea fo’i ua foa’ia mai e le Neil’s Ace Home Center, o le a aofia uma i mea e foa’ia atu e le Koluse Mumu i aiga e tau fesoasoani e fa’aleleia le tausiga o nai aiga, ae maise ia i latou ua fa’aleagaina fale nofo e alaala’i ai,” o lea se fa’amalamalamaga a le tama’ita’i o June Maeava, o se tasi o volenitia a le Koluse Mumu o i ai i le taimi nei.

E tusa ai o le foa’i mai le Ace sa fa’ailoa mai le agaga fa’afetai tele o Maeava, le sa ia faia se vala’au fa’apitoa i le CEO Ngaiere Taufas’asau o le Neil’s Ace Home Center, “E matua ou fa’afetaia lava le pulega a le ACE, Ngaiere ma le pulega, ona o le vave ona tali mai i se fa’atoga atu ona ua leai se mea e tagolima i ai le tatou Koluse Mumu e avatu i nai o tatou tagata o mafatia ia Gita. Fa’afetai o lea ua outou tali fa’atupu, fa’amalo le alofa, le pulega ma le aufaigaluega atoa. Fa’atunu e le Atua mea ua fa’agaogaoina ma ia saga fa’alauolaola pea le pisinisi.”

AUKUKA SLP -FA’AAOGA MO LE TAUSIGA O I LATOU I SULUFAIGA:

O le aufaigaluega a le SLP i le a’oga a Tafuna Elementary lea ua fa’aaogaina atoa mo le saunia o taumafa mo le tausiga o e uma ua nofoia sulu-faiga ua tapena e le Malo. E 12 nofoaga sulufai, ma o lo’o faaogaina ai faleaoga ma nofoaga a ekalesia i le atunu’u.

“O le fa’amoemoe lea ua i ai, ia lava le taimi e tapena ai falea’oga mo le fa’aauu o a’oga a le fanau i le aso Lua o le vaiaso a sau. O le a le faigofie lenei tapenaga ae fa’amoemoe o le a lava le taimi o faia’oga e fa’avasega lelei ai latou potu a’oga a’o le’i feiloa’i ma le fanau a’oga i le aso Lua a sau,” o se tala lea a le tama’ita’i Sui Fa’atonu Fa’auifono Vaitautolu.

“Talu mai le amataga ona tausia o nofoaga o sulufa’iga e silia lava ma le 700 ipu mea taumafa e fa’atolu i le aso ona tapena ma auina atu i nofoaga uma o lo’o alaala ai le mamalu o le atunu’u o lo ua afaina o latou fale nofo i le Gita. O iinei fo’i lea e tapena uma atu ai lava latou mea taumafa fa’atolu na a’ai i le aso. Peita’i o le aso lenei, ua fa’atonuina mai ia na’o le lua ‘aiga e tapena, ae mamafa uma lava taumafataga na.” o a Vaitautolu lea.

► Saili...

Mai itulau 9

E talitonu ni isi o le aufai fa’atoaga a le atunu’u, afai e le vave galulue le aufai fa’atoaga e toto ma atina’e fa’atoaga, o le a umi se taimi e feagai ai Samoa ma le oge i taumafa.

Na taua e i latou nei le oge sa feagai ma le atu Samoa ina ua tuana’i ‘afa tetele i le 1990 ia

O fa ma Valelia. O le latou tali-tonuga, e le tatau ona toe alia’e mai ia tulaga pagatia i lenei vaitau.

O le tele o fa’atoaga i vaega na malosi i ai le agi o le matagi ua matua faaleagaina uma i lalo. O ma’umaga, fa’i ma ulu ua toulu ma pauu i lalo.

Na taua e le ali’i faifa’atoaga ia Malaki Unuto’a i le Samoa News e faapea, afai e le vave mai se fesoasoani a le malo tele poo isi atumotu o le pasefika i le tulaga o taumafa e pei o le fa’i ma le taro, o le a umi se taimi e pagatia ai Samoa e lua i le oga ona o taumafa.

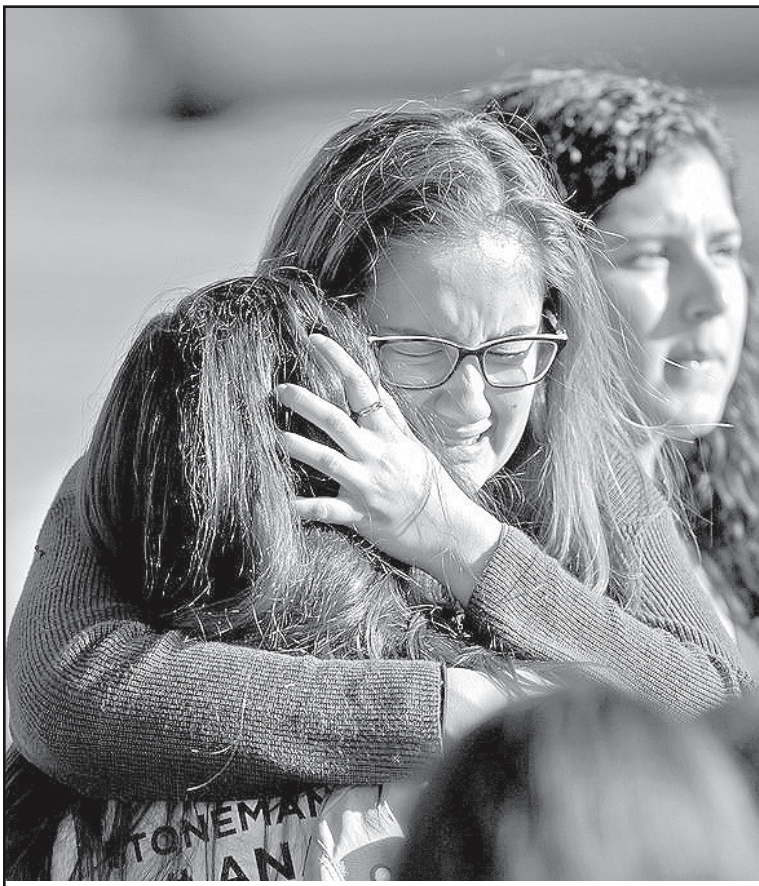




IN THE COMMUNITY

(Photos: Leua Aiono Frost)

Former student opens fire at Florida high school, killing 17



Students released from a lockdown embrace following following a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2018.

(John McCall/South Florida Sun-Sentinel via AP)

By **TERRY SPENCER** and **KELLI KENNEDY**, Associated Press

PARKLAND, Fla. (AP) — A former student opened fire with a semi-automatic rifle at a Florida high school Wednesday, killing at least 17 people and sending hundreds of students fleeing into the streets in the nation's deadliest school shooting since a gunman attacked an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut.

The shooter, who was equipped with a gas mask and smoke grenades, set off a fire alarm to draw students out of classrooms shortly before the day ended at one of the state's largest schools, officials said.

Authorities offered no immediate details on the 19-year-old suspect or any possible motive, except to say that he had been kicked out of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, which has about 3,000 students.

Students who knew the shooter, identified as Nikolas Cruz, described a volatile teenager whose strange behavior had

caused others to end friendships with him, particularly after the fight that led to his expulsion.

Frantic parents rushed to the school to find SWAT team members and ambulances surrounding the huge campus. Live television footage showed emergency workers who appeared to be treating the wounded on sidewalks.

"It is a horrific situation," said Robert Runcie, superintendent of the school district in Parkland, about an hour's drive north of Miami. "It is a horrible day for us."

The suspect was taken into custody without a fight in a residential neighborhood about a mile away. He had multiple magazines of ammunition, authorities said.

"It's catastrophic. There really are no words," Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel told reporters.

The attacker used the fire alarm "so the kids would come pouring out of the classrooms into the hall," Sen. Bill Nelson told CNN.

"And there the carnage began," said Nelson, who said he was briefed by the FBI.

The Florida Democrat said he did not know if the gunman used the smoke grenades, but he assumed that's why he had a gas mask on.

Most of the fatalities were inside the building, though some victims were found outside. The dead included a football coach, the sheriff said.

More than a dozen other people were wounded and taken to hospitals, doctors said.

Victoria Olvera, a junior at the school, said Cruz was expelled last school year because he got into a fight with his ex-girlfriend's new boyfriend. She said he had been abusive to his girlfriend.

"I think everyone had in their minds if anybody was going to do it, it was going to be him," she said.

Dakota Mutchler, another junior, said he used to be friends with Cruz. But he cut off the friendship as Cruz's behavior "started progressively getting a little more weird." Cruz posted on Instagram about killing animals and threatened one of Mutchler's friends, he said.

He remembered that Cruz had a pellet gun and did target practice in his backyard.

Student Daniel Huerfano said he recognized Cruz from an Instagram photo in which Cruz had posed with a gun in front of his face.

Cruz "was that weird kid that you see ... like a loner," he said.

Freshman Max Charles was in class when he heard five gunshots.

"We were in the corner, away from the windows," he said. "The teacher locked the door and turned off the light. I thought maybe I could die or something."

As he was leaving the building, he saw four dead students and one dead teacher. He said he was relieved when he finally found his mother.

"I was happy that I was alive," Max said. "She was crying when she saw me."

About an hour after the attack, Michael Nembhard was sitting in his garage on a cul-de-sac when he saw a young man in a burgundy shirt walking down the street. In an instant, a police cruiser pulled up, and officers jumped out with guns drawn.

"All I heard was 'Get on the ground! Get on the ground!'" Nembhard said. He said the man did as he was told.

The day started normally at the school, which had a morning fire drill. Students were in class around 2:30 p.m. when another alarm sounded.

Junior Noah Parness said he and the other students calmly went outside to their fire-drill areas when he suddenly heard popping sounds.

(Continued on page 15)



CORRECTS SPELLING TO MARJORY NOT MARJORIE
Students are evacuated by police from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., on Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2018, after a shooter opened fire on the campus.

(Mike Stocker/South Florida Sun-Sentinel via AP)

Frenchman admits killing girl who vanished from Alps wedding



FILE - In this Sept.28 2017 file photo, the father of a missing girl, Maelys, Joachim de Araujo, left, and his wife, Jennifer, hold a press conference in Lyon, central France. French authorities say a man in custody confessed to “unintentionally” killing the 9-year-old girl whose disappearance from a wedding party in the Alps prompted nationwide concern. The prosecutor said chief suspect Nordahl Lelandais told investigators Wednesday Feb.14, 2018 that he killed her accidentally, hid the body and then returned to the wedding party before eventually dumping the body in the ravine.

(AP Photo/Laurent Cipriani, File)

By ANGELA CHARLTON, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — A former military dog trainer confessed Wednesday to “unintentionally” killing a 9-year-old girl whose disappearance from a wedding party in the Alps last year prompted nationwide concern and months of fruitless searching.

Investigators at last found Maelys De Araujo’s skull and some other remains Wednesday in a snow-covered ravine six months after she went missing, according to Grenoble Prosecutor Jean-Yves Coquillat.

Police were led to the remote site by chief suspect Nordahl Lelandais, who was arrested and charged after her disappearance but repeatedly had denied wrongdoing. He was a guest at the same wedding in Pont-de-Beauvoisin, near the French mountain city of Chambéry.

Lelandais decided to come clean Wednesday after investigators found traces of the girl’s blood in the trunk of Lelandais’ car, the prosecutor told reporters.

Lelandais told investigators that he killed her accidentally, hid the body near his house and then returned to the wedding party. He later dumped the child’s body in the remote ravine.

His lawyer said Lelandais had let children at the wedding party look at dogs he had in his car.

After Maelys went missing, police questioned more than 200 potential witnesses, and hundreds of volunteers helped search the area for days. Police dogs found the girl’s scent but lost it in the wedding hall parking lot, suggesting she may have been forced into a vehicle or gotten into one voluntarily.

In his confession, Lelandais did not explain the circumstances of the girl’s death, the prosecutor said.

“Lelandais asked investigation judges to question him today, because he had revelations to make,” the prosecutor said. Afterward, the prosecutor said, Lelandais apologized to the girl and her parents.

His lawyer Alain Jakubowicz described surprise at hearing Lelandais’ confession of Maelys’ “accidental death,” but did not give further details about what happened. The lawyer said he was dropping his request for Lelandais’ release.

“I’m a father. Nothing worse can happen to you as a parent,” he said, choking up.

Lelandais is also now suspected of killing a soldier months before in the same region.

Israeli leader vows to carry on despite corruption charges

By ARON HELLER, Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to carry on Wednesday after police recommended indicting him on corruption charges, angrily dismissing the allegations and the critics calling on him to step down.

With his coalition partners dutifully lining up behind him, the longtime leader readied himself for a prolonged battle over his political legitimacy as the attorney general considers whether to ultimately press charges.

The police announcement that Netanyahu’s acceptance of nearly \$300,000 in gifts from two billionaires amounted to bribery sent shockwaves through the Israeli political system and delivered a humiliating blow to Netanyahu after years of allegations and investigations. But it did not appear to immediately threaten his lengthy rule as reaction largely fell along partisan lines. Nearly all of Netanyahu’s Cabinet ministers issued statements of support and his coalition partners all signaled they would stick by him, for now.

“Let me reassure you: the coalition is stable. No one, not I and no one else, plans to go to elections. We will continue to work together with you for the people of Israel until the end of our term,” he said to a gathering of local government officials in Tel Aviv. “After I read the recommendations report, I can say it is biased, extreme, full of holes like Swiss cheese and doesn’t hold water.”In an impassioned defense, Netanyahu took aim at police investigators saying their figures were vastly inflated and tried “to create a false impression of exchanges that never existed.”

Though he is not legally compelled to resign, several opposition figures called on Netanyahu to do so to avoid corrupting the office further.Under similar circumstances a decade ago Netanyahu, then the opposition leader, urged then-Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to resign after police recommended he be indicted, saying a leader “sunk up to his neck in interrogations” could not govern properly.In contrast to Olmert, who eventually stepped down and was convicted and imprisoned, Netanyahu is still relatively popular with the public and enjoys broad political support in his Likud party and among coalition partners — nearly all of whom stand to lose power if elections were held today.

Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan, who oversees the police, said the prime minister “deserves the assumption of innocence,” while Netanyahu’s coalition whip, David Amsalem, accused the police of committing “an illegitimate act here to attempt a coup d’etat in Israel.”

More importantly, the coalition parties that keep Netanyahu afloat said they would await the ruling of Attorney General Avihai Mandelblit, who could take months to decide whether to file charges.



DUP’s Arlene Foster speaks to the media at Stormont Parliament buildings in Belfast, Northern Ireland, Monday Feb. 12, 2018, as Prime Minister Theresa May and her Irish counterpart Leo Varadkar are holding crunch talks at Stormont House. Northern Ireland’s Catholic-Protestant power-sharing government has been suspended since January 2017, but with renewed high level talks both sides said Monday that progress has been made.

(Niall Carson/PA via AP)



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Dr. Lori Devlin, stands in one of the Norton Children’s Hospital neonatal intensive care units Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2018, in Louisville, Ky. This particular NICU, is dedicated to newborns of opioid addicted mothers, that are suffering with newborn abstinence syndrome, is kept dark and quiet due to increased production of neurotransmitters in newborns of addicted mothers, which can disrupt the nervous system and overstimulate bodily functions.

(AP Photo/Timothy D. Easley)

How best to treat opioids’ youngest sufferers? No one knows

By LINDSEY TANNER, AP Medical Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — Two babies, born 15 months apart to the same young woman overcoming opioid addiction. Two very different treatments.

Sarah Sherbert’s first child was whisked away to a hospital special-care nursery for two weeks of treatment for withdrawal from doctor-prescribed methadone that her mother continued to use during her pregnancy. Nurses hesitated to let Sherbert hold the girl and hovered nervously when she visited to breast-feed.

Born just 15 months later and 30 miles away at a different South Carolina hospital, Sherbert’s second child was started on medicine even before he showed any withdrawal symptoms and she was allowed to keep him in her room to encourage breast-feeding and bonding. His hospital stay was just a week.

“It was like night and day,” Sherbert said.

The different approaches highlight a sobering fact: The surge has outpaced the science, and no one knows the best way to treat the opioid epidemic’s youngest patients.

Trying to cope with the rising numbers of affected infants, hospitals around the United States are taking a scattershot approach to treating the tremors, hard-to-soothe crying, diarrhea and other hallmark symptoms of newborn abstinence syndrome.

“It’s a national problem,” said Dr. Lori Devlin, a University of Louisville newborn specialist. “There’s no gold-standard treatment.”

With help from \$1 million in National Institutes of Health funding, researchers are seeking to change that by identifying the practices that could lead to a national standard for evidence-based treatment. A rigorous multi-center study comparing treatments and outcomes in hard-hit areas could start by the end of this year, said Dr. Matthew Gillman, who is helping lead the effort.

“When there’s so much variability in practice, not everyone can be doing the very best thing,” Gillman said.

Once the umbilical cord is cut, babies born to opioid users are at risk for developing withdrawal symptoms. By some estimates, one infant is born with the condition in the U.S. every 25 minutes. The numbers have tripled since 2008 at a rate that has solid medical research comparing treatments and outcomes struggling to keep pace.

Not all opioid-exposed babies develop the syndrome, but drug use late in a pregnancy increases the chances and can cause dependence in fetuses and newborns. These infants are not born with addiction, which experts consider a disease involving compulsive, harmful drug-seeking behavior. But the sudden withdrawal of opioids from their mothers may cause increased production of neurotransmitters, which can disrupt the nervous system and overstimulate bodily functions. Symptoms can last for months.

The condition can result from a mother’s use of illicit drugs, but it also can stem from mothers being prescribed methadone or other anti-addiction medicine. Doctors believe the benefits of that treatment for the mothers outweigh any risks to their infants.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention doesn’t routinely track the condition, but the agency’s most recent data — from 2014 — indicates that the syndrome affects nearly 11 in every 1,000 U.S. births. The CDC said it is working with the March of Dimes and several states to get a better picture of the number of affected infants and how they fare develop-

mentally and academically into childhood.

Some studies have suggested possible increased risks for developmental delays and behavior problems, but no research has been able to determine if that’s due to mothers’ drug use during pregnancy, infants’ treatment after birth or something completely unrelated. And there’s no definitive evidence that these children fare worse than unexposed youngsters.

“It’s very, very frustrating” not knowing those answers, Devlin said. “It’s such a difficult population to go back and do research on. They’re people who often don’t trust the system, often people who have had lots of trauma in their lives.”

Treatment aims to reduce or even prevent symptoms. Some hospitals use morphine drops, while others use methadone and sometimes sedatives. Some send the babies straight to newborn intensive care units and some focus on comfort care from moms, allowing them to room-in with their infants. A recently published Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center analysis linked rooming-in with less medication use and shorter hospital stays for infants, but it can be difficult if mothers are still in the throes of addiction.

A Florida hospital is even testing tiny acupuncture needles on affected infants.

Many hospitals use a 40-year-old scoring system to measure 21 symptoms and frame diagnosis and treatment length, but some have created their own scales.

The Government Accountability Office’s health care team has called for federal action to address the issue, saying the current recommendations from the U.S. Health and Human Services Department amount to a half-baked strategy lacking priorities and a timeline for implementation.

The department’s recommendations include education for doctors and nurses to teach them how to manage affected infants, along with an emphasis on non-drug treatment.

Katherine Iritani, director of the GAO’s health care team, said government officials have since indicated that they are convening experts to develop and finalize a plan by March 15.

“We’ll review it and make sure it’s responsive to our recommendations,” she said.

A separate GAO report released last week recommended beefed-up government guidance to help states implement programs that ensure safe care for opioid-affected infants and treatment for parents still struggling with drug use.

Medicaid pays for more than 80 percent of costs for treating affected babies, totaling about \$1 billion in 2012, the GAO has found.



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Parents wait for news after a reports of a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., on Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2018. (AP Photo/Joel Auerbach)



Medical personnel tend to a victim following a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., on Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2018. (John McCall/South Florida Sun-Sentinel via AP)

► **Former...**

Continued from page 12

“We saw a bunch of teachers running down the stairway, and then everybody shifted and broke into a sprint,” Parness said. “I hopped a fence.”

Beth Feingold said her daughter, Brittani, sent a text that said, “We’re on code red. I’m fine,” but sent another text shortly afterward saying, “Mom, I’m so scared.” She was later able to escape.

Students heard loud bangs as the shooter fired. Many of them hid under desks or in closets and barricaded doors.

Television footage showed students leaving in a single-file line with their hands over their heads as officers urged them to evacuate quickly.

The scene was reminiscent of the Newtown attack, which shocked even a country numbed by the regularity of school shootings. The Dec. 14, 2012, assault at Sandy Hook Elementary School killed 26 people — 20 first-graders and six staff members.

The 20-year-old Connecticut gunman, who also fatally shot his mother in her bed, then killed himself.

When Caesar Figueroa got to the Florida school to check on his 16-year-old daughter, he saw helicopters and police officers wielding guns.

“It was crazy and my daughter wasn’t answering her phone.” She finally texted him that she was inside a closet with friends.

Len Murray’s 17-year-old son, a junior at the school, sent his parents a chilling text: “Mom and Dad, there have been shots fired on campus at school. There are police sirens outside. I’m in the auditorium and the doors are locked.”

A few minutes later, he texted again, “I’m fine.”

Murray said he raced to the school only to be stopped by authorities under a highway overpass within view of the school buildings. He said he told his son to save his battery and stop texting. The boy’s mother told him to turn off his ringer.

Murray said he’s had just one thought running through his mind since his son’s text: “All I keep thinking about is when I dropped him off this morning.

I usually say, ‘I love you,’ and I didn’t this morning. He’s 17, he’s at that age. And I didn’t say it this morning, and I’m just kicking myself right now over and over and over.”

The school was to be closed for the rest of the week.



Tropical Cyclone Gita

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Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., leaves the chamber after a speech which criticized President Donald Trump’s immigration policy and supported “Dreamers,” young immigrants helped by the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, at the Capitol in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2018.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

Group of senators reaches immigration deal on Dreamers, wall

By ALAN FRAM and KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) — A group of senators reached a bipartisan agreement Wednesday aimed at balancing Democrats’ fight to offer citizenship to young “Dreamer” immigrants with President Donald Trump’s demands for billions to build his coveted border wall with Mexico. Though the compromise was announced by 16 senators with centrist views on the issue and was winning support from many Democrats, it faced an uncertain fate. Leaders were trying to schedule votes on that plan and three other immigration proposals for Thursday, which they hoped would bring the chamber’s showdown over the hot-button issue to a close. While not specifically men-

tioning the bipartisan pact, Trump urged lawmakers to oppose any plan that doesn’t meet his more stringent demands, which include curbs on legal immigration and the abolition of a visa lottery. The Senate’s No. 2 Republican, John Cornyn of Texas, warned that lawmakers need to address Trump’s entire proposal, saying, “We need to take the president seriously.” There were also qualms among Democrats. The party’s No. 2 Senate leader, Richard Durbin of Illinois, said some Democrats had “serious issues” with parts of the plan. Those concerns focused on its spending for Trump’s wall and its bar against Dreamers sponsoring their parents for legal residency. “We’re not there yet,” Durbin said of the 60 votes the proposal would need for approval. So far, no other proposals from either side seem able to do that. Republicans control the chamber 51-49, though Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., has missed the last several weeks while battling cancer. The bipartisan measure’s sponsors included eight GOP senators. That meant just three more Republicans would be needed for it to prevail if it is backed by all 47 Democrats and the two independents who usually support them. The compromise emerged as senators spent a third day of debate largely as they spent the first two — with the chamber floor mostly empty. Other than an initial roll call allowing formal debate to begin, there have been no other votes while party leaders talk behind the scenes about scheduling votes on specific proposals. The centrist proposal was produced by a group led by Sens. Susan Collins, R-Maine, and Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., that spent weeks seeking middle ground. It would grant a 10- to 12-year route to citizenship for 1.8 million Dreamers, participants said. That’s the same number Trump has suggested helping with his own wider-ranging but more restrictive proposal. Dreamers are young immigrants who were brought to the U.S. illegally as children and still have no permanent protection from deportation. The plan would provide \$25 billion over a decade, \$2.5 billion annually, for a wall and other border security measures, the same total Trump has requested. It would bar Dreamers from sponsoring their parents for citizenship, far narrower than Trump’s proposal to prevent all legal immigrants from bringing parents and siblings to the U.S.





Teen meal

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