U.S. Ups Pressure On Somali Pirates

ABU DHABI, Bahrain, (UPI) – U.S. naval forces are stepping up their efforts to fight pirates off the Somali coast of east Africa, military officials say.

As pirates become more violent and aggressive and target key oil shipping lanes, the United States has put more resources into patrols and has participated in seaborne hostage rescues, USA Today reported Monday.

The United States is "very concerned about the increasing number of acts of piracy and armed robbery" there, National Security Adviser Lt. Nate Christensen, a spokesman for the 5th Fleet in Bahrain, told the newspaper.

The United States succeeded in bringing a resolution through the U.N. Security Council last month authorizing it to use "all necessary means" to battle piracy off the Somali coast, and since then has prevented at least two pirate attacks there, the newspaper said.

Lax Laws Spare Employers Of Illegals

WASHINGTON, (UP) – The failure of U.S. immigration officials to arrest many employers of illegal immigrants is due to an insufficient level of laws aimed at them, analysts say.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials say they have made 937 criminal arrests at U.S. workplaces in the first nine months of this year, with 99 of those arrests aimed at company supervisors, The Washington Post reported Monday.

"Why are employers not punished more often? Because the laws we have don't really authorize that," Stewart Baker, assistant secretary for policy at the Homeland Security Department, told a group of immigration analysts last week.

Analysts say business interests, labor unions and advocates for immigrants have succeeded in watering down penalties for employers for 20 years.

"If you want law enforcement, you have to have laws that are enforceable," Doris Meissner, former head of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, told Post, adding a 1986 measure aimed at punishing employers who hire illegal immigrants "has just been chronically flawed from the time it was passed."

Gitmo Detainee's Military Trial Begins

GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba, (UP) – The U.S. military trial of a low-level operative for Osama bin Laden is seen as a test for "a line of cases that might be tried up the security chain, observers say.

Salam Ahmed Hamdan, accused of ferrying weapons for al-Qaida, will be tried before a military commission with a jury of uniformed officers at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, The Washington Post reported Monday. Evidence obtained from "cruel" and "inhuman" interrogation methods -- which Hamdan says he experienced -- is admissible in certain circumstances, as is hearsay evidence.

"It's the first contested war crimes trial since World War II, so it's important," chief prosecutor U.S. Army Col. Lawrence Morris said recently.

Once Hamdan's trial ends, trials for other Gitmo detainees will go on.

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EXCERPT OF

THE J.L. TURNER LEGAL ASSOCIATION

Arthur E. Anthony, a Partner based in the Dallas office of Locke Lord Bissell & Liddell, has been named President-Elect of the J.L. Turner Legal Association (JLTLA), the African-American bar association in Dallas. Anthony, who most recently served as one of three Directors of the JLTLA as well as a Co-Chair of its Public Policy Committee, will assume the Presidency early next year, which will be for a one-year term.

As President-Elect, Anthony will prepare to take on the role of overseeing the JLTLA's mission to improve the quality of life in the community through education, service and scholarship. Anthony will guide the JLTLA in its efforts to provide attorney mentors for law students; perform educational and other community outreach projects for residents in the North Texas area; assist JLTLA members and the community with becoming more aware of African-American attorneys who practice in various areas of the law; and provide scholarships to law students demonstrating financial or other needs.

Anthony, who was recognized by the JLTLA as its 2007 Chairman of the Year, focuses his practice on general litigation, with particular emphasis on banking and financial services, construction, insurance as well as business contract and tort matters. Anthony has experience at all levels of trial and pre-trial litigation, including substantive motion practice and alternative dispute resolution. He Co-Chairs Locke Lord's Financial Services and Energy Practice groups.

Locke Lord Bissell & Liddell LLP is a full-service, national law firm of more than 760 attorneys with offices in Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, London, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Sacramento and Washington, D.C. With a vast geographic scope, and a national reputation in complex litigation, regulatory and transactional work, Locke Lord is focused on achieving client success as a team. Among Locke Lord's many strong practice areas are appellate, capital markets, corporate, class action litigation, employee benefits, energy, environmental, financial services, health care, insurance and reinsurance, intellectual property, labor and employment, public law, real estate, regulatory, REIT, tax and technology.

Zoellick: 'Now Or Never' For Trade Talks

WASHINGTON, (UP) – World Bank President Robert Zoellick is urging trade ministers to reach an accord in the Doha Round of the world trade talks.

Zoellick said it's "now or never" for negotiations among ministers attending the World Trade Organization talks.

"Progress on agriculture is paramount," Zoellick said in a statement. "An open and fair system would create opportunities for developing country farmers to expand production, for consumers in all countries to lower prices, and for governments to save on the costs of subsidies, improving budgets.

"Both developing and developed economies stand to gain from lower barriers to goods and agriculture."

Zoellick urged negotiators to resist pressure for protectionism, saying that would return the world to "economic isolationism" and "would reap the losses, not the gains, of globalization." Talks got under way Monday.

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Dollar Tree Announces Store Opening In Richardson

CHESAPEAKE, VA – Dollar Tree, Inc. (NASDAQ: DLTR), the nation’s leading $1 price point variety store retailer, announced a new store opening in Richardson, Texas. The 6,876 square foot store is located at Dal-Rich Village, 101 S. Coit Road. In addition, the 8,832 square foot Duncanville Dollar Tree store relocated to 335 S. Cedar Ridge Road.

This year Dollar Tree will continue to add to its nearly 3,500 stores, opening 25 stores in July alone. Open seven days a week, Dollar Tree stores offer a fast, fun and friendly shopping experience. “Dollar Tree, America’s favorite dollar store, has all the things you want and need in one convenient place,” said Chelle Davis, Dollar Tree spokesperson. “As summer wraps up, Dollar Tree is the destination for saving money on end-of-summer party supplies and to get a head start on back-to-school shopping.”

School is almost here, and Dollar Tree stores across the nation are loading their shelves with inexpensiv supplies for back-to-school lists. In addition, Dollar Tree offers snacks, sandwich items and drinks to fill their lunch boxes. “Teachers and students love to shop at Dollar Tree to find the best prices on back-to-school items,” said Davis.

“Save money in our ‘Teachers’ Corner’ which we specifically created in response to the needs of the many teachers who shop at our stores. Our values include paper, binders, note- books, pens, pencils, crayons, calculators, protractors, rulers, lunch boxes and a variety of lunch items – all for just $1.”

About Dollar Tree

Headquartered in Chesapeake, Va., Dollar Tree, Inc. is the nation’s leading $1 discount variety store chain with nearly 3,500 stores in 48 states. Dollar Tree offers brand name and private label basics. Its aisles are clean and bright and offer a vast selection of seasonal items; party goods including gift wrap and bags for all occasions; health and beauty products; housewares such as stemware, plates and kitchen linens; food and snacks; apparel and accessories; household cleaners; and specialty sections such as the Create-a-Gift Basket section and Teachers’ Corner.

The company operates a nationwide logistics network and employs more than 40,000 associates. Dollar Tree trades publicly on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the ticker symbol DLTR. For more information, visit www.dollartree.com.

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WASHINGTON, (UP) – A person my age has watched many things decline in America, and few get better. As one of my neighbors says, everything good is gone or going. In that category we must now include good reporting.

When I started work in Washington in 1973, it was axiomatic that a newspaper reporter talked to many sources for any story. The story, in turn, reflected a number of viewpoints and Perspectives. No reporter worth his bourbon would have dreamed of just putting some press release put out by the government.

But that is now what they all seem to do, especially in covering the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Forgetting that the phrase “to lie like a bulletin” is military in origin – the reference is to bulletins issued by Napoleon’s Grande Armee nearly 200 years ago – I’ll eat my yurt. One town, maybe, but what does taking a town mean in the headline “Marines drive Taliban from volatile province,” namely Helmand.

Cleveland Plain Dealer, a paper I like, printed an Associated Press article under the headline “Marines drive Taliban from volatile province,” namely Helmand. As best I can tell, none. The same number appears to be trying to answer that question from other, more reliable sources.

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The reporting on Afghanistan is, if anything, worse. On Sunday, June 22, the Cleveland Plain Dealer, a paper I like, printed an Associated Press article under the headline “Marines drive Taliban from volatile province,” namely Helmand. The article itself more modestly claims victory in one Helmand town, Garmsir. If the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit has driven the Taliban out of Helmand province, I’ll eat my yurt. One town, maybe, but what does taking a town mean in a guerrilla war? When the U.S. Marines leave, which they will, the Taliban will return.

The fact of the matter is, the whole NATO/American effort in Afghanistan is circling the drain. The American papers should be full of in-depth, multi-sourced stories about the war there. A friend just back from Britain reports the British press is full of just such stories. In one recent 10-day period, the Brits lost nine soldiers killed, including their first woman. Was that reported anywhere in the U.S. press? As best I can tell, no. The same number appears to be trying to answer that question from other, more reliable sources.

How many reporters are asking the majors who brief the press the central strategic question, namely whether there is any evidence a state is re-emerging in Iraq? As best I can tell, none. The same number appears to be trying to answer that question from other, more reliable sources.

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