

WORLD & NATION

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NEWS IN BRIEF

India

ADNHRA PRADESH STATE



Police are accused of using excessive force after a battle with red sandalwood smugglers killed 20 suspects, according to the BBC. Red sandalwood (prized in furniture making) was banned from sale in 2000, but the wood sells for tens of thousands of dollars per tonne, so smuggling is rampant. According to police, they confronted over 100 smugglers Tuesday, who refused to respond and hand over the logs. There has been an outcry over the shooting, as the smugglers did not have firearms (although they may have attacked with axes and sticks).

USA

NORTH CHARLESTON, SC



Michael Slager, a white police officer, has been charged with murder after shooting 50 year old Walter Scott, who is black. Slager pulled Scott over due to a broken taillight, according to Vice news. Scott fled, and Slager pursued him, using his Taser to no effect. He then fired eight shots at Scott, killing him. Slager claims that Scott took his Taser, but a video of the incident apparently shows Slager dropping something by Scott's body, possibly his Taser, before radioing in the incident.

Germany

BERLIN



Dimitris Mardas, the Greek deputy finance minister, has asked Germany for 278.7 billion Euro's as reparations for damage to the country during World War II, according to the Guardian. Sigmar Gabriel, Germany's economic minister, labeled the reparations as "stupid." Many people have remarked that Greece owes various countries in the European Union, but mostly Germany, 240 billion Euro's after being bailed out during the economic crisis. The opposition in Germany did consider paying out a 10.3 billion euro "forced loan" that Germany compelled Greece to pay in 1942.

Pakistan

ISLAMABAD



A high court in Pakistan has charged Jonathan Banks, the former head of the CIA branch in Islamabad, with murder and waging war against the country, according to The Guardian. The court pointed to a drone strike in December of 2009 that killed at least three people. Banks was ousted after charges were brought against him in 2010 by a Pakistani tribesman named Karim Khan, whose brother and son were killed by a drone. He is now residing in the U.S. and unlikely to appear for his court date in Islamabad, making the charges more symbolic than practical.

BY ABE KENMORE
WORLD & NATION EDITOR

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Obama's Trans Pacific Partnership gains limited national backing

BY AMOL GARG
STAFF WRITER

The Trans-Pacific Partnership is the triumph of President Obama's economic agenda. In discussion since 2005, this negotiation incorporates Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Vietnam.

"I feel that one of the reasons this deal is being so heavily pursued in other nations, especially Asia, is because the U.S. wants to remove some of the barriers involved with trade and make trade around the world easier," said Chinese national and Early College student Jeffery Li.

With the signing of the treaty, not only would U.S. products be increasingly sold abroad but also more jobs would be created in order to supply the demand of products, according to the organization Trade Benefits America.

In addition, the treaty could provide a counterbalance to China's growing economy and aid in making the United States less dependent on the Chinese market by allowing increased trade between the 12 nations.

Although the details of this treaty have not been shared, drafts provided by WikiLeaks and speculations about the contents of the deal have given rise to concerns regarding lawsuits and workers' rights.

"If it goes through, which I'm not sure it will, it will allow for-profit companies to sue if they think that any kinds of laws are infringing on their ability to freely trade, and that could potentially include environmental regulations," said Maria Rosales, chair and associate professor of political science.

It is possible that environmental and working condition legislation would be considered a barrier to free trade. Therefore, the U.S., which has set high standards in areas such as the environment, food, safety and worker rights, could be forced to revise such standards or face legal action.

"(The Trans-Pacific Partnership) will allow foreign corporations to sue the United States government for actions that undermine their investment 'expectations' and hurt their business," said Jonathan Weisman in The New York Times.

The trade deal may or may not help the economy, but the damage to environmental and labor laws may not be worth it no matter the result.

"I feel this is another way to market free market capitalism and to give breaks to Southeast Asian countries," said Assistant Professor of Political Science Robert Duncan. "I don't think it is going to help the U.S. worker at all, and I don't think it is going to help U.S. industry at all."

"This is probably going to be another way to encourage development in Asian countries; the payoff will be the loss of environmental protections with nothing in return for the United States."

Considered as one of Obama's last chances at shaping the economy and building a legacy as president, the Trans-Pacific Partnership is also alienating other Democratic leaders.

"The opposition to the trade agreement comprises unions, environmental and consumer groups – in other words, the entire Democratic base," said Lori Wallach, director and founder of Global Trade Watch, in The Guardian.

In stark contrast, Republicans are the main supporters of the negotiation. They argue that the Trans-Pacific Partnership is similar to other free trade deals, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement, implemented before.

However, despite the Republican backing, it is unclear if President Obama will be able to pass the treaty. This is mainly because, without full support of Democrats and limited backing of the Republicans, the negotiation of the treaty would take a long time.

That is why President Obama has requested fast-track authority from Congress. If approved, President Obama would then have the ability to fully negotiate the deal and present it to Congress for a yes or no vote. Congress would have a maximum of 90 days to decide if the treaty would be approved or rejected without any changes or filibusters.

This power, however, does not come without a price. "The fast-track procedure is designed to limit public scrutiny," said Republican Rosa DeLauro. "It gives up congressional constitutional authority to review the Trans-Pacific partnership."

Despite the controversy and the split regarding the treaty, President Obama believes that the trade agreement would inherently be the best choice for Americans and he remains intent on having the negotiations pass.

Until the deal is made public, its eventual content and fate will remain unknown.

STUDY PHOTO OF THE WEEK ABROAD



Ballyvaughan, Ireland

Natalia Petkov '16 is currently studying abroad in Ireland this semester and took this photo of a horse that lives in her backyard.

Each week we will feature a picture from students' experiences abroad. Whether you have or are currently abroad, we would love to see photos from your trip. Please email photos to Sara Minsky at minskysj@guilford.edu with information about the subject and where & when you studied.