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JUDGMENT DAY IN BAGHDAD



DAVID FURST/AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

Former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein yells as a bailiff attempts to silence him during delivery of the verdict in his trial held in Baghdad's Green Zone on Sunday. Saddam was sentenced to death for his role in the killing in 1982 of nearly 150 people in the mainly Shiite village of Dujail.

Death sentence for Saddam

BY ELLEN KNICKMEYER

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A divided and violent Iraq broke into starkly disparate displays of emotion on Sunday after judges in Baghdad condemned former president Saddam Hussein to hang for committing wilful murder in the course of crimes against humanity.

In the south, a Shia Muslim father held aloft the tiny shrouded remains of a young son killed long ago by

Saddam's armed campaign against the country's Shiites. The father danced with his son's bones in the street among celebrating crowds, elated at the death penalty handed the former dictator.

In the north, a Sunni Muslim man in Saddam's home city strapped an explosive belt around his waist and vowed to take justice for the death penalty handed Saddam.

"Today's sentences were a death sentence on righteousness, and this

makes it obligatory to take the revenge for Iraq," said the man, 29-year-old Ibrahim Yahya, among other Sunnis jabbing rifle muzzles and pistols in the air in angry protests.

Elsewhere, Kurds pounded giant drums in traditional celebration. Shiite boys and men threw candies and fired into the air. Bitter Sunni men clasped Saddam's portraits in one hand, their weapons in another.

In Baghdad's Green Zone, a five-judge Iraqi panel announced its

unanimous sentence of death for Saddam.

Two of Saddam's henchmen, including his half-brother Barzan al-Tikriti, were also sentenced to hang for their involvement in the killing of 148 Shia Muslims in the village of Dujail in 1982. His former vice-president was sentenced to life in prison and three low-level Baath officials were jailed for 15 years.

See DEATH SENTENCE A5

OTTAWA IGNORES SUPPORT FOR INJECTION SITES

Harper government froze new sites even though own poll showed backing for them

BY ALLAN WOODS

OTTAWA — The Harper government went against advice contained in its own internal opinion polling when it put a freeze on the creation of any new drug-injection sites for hard-core addicts, CanWest News Service has learned.

Just days before Health Minister Tony Clement's Sept. 1 announcement that the government would stop, for an indefinite period of time, considering applications to open injection sites modelled on the existing one in Vancouver, Prime Minister Stephen Harper's top bureaucratic advisers received a poll they had commissioned showing six in 10 Canadians support the program.

In fact, the survey revealed that a clear majority — 56 per cent versus 38 per cent — want the government to create more injection sites that allow addicts to receive drugs with clean needles under the care of medical professionals. In British Columbia, home to the country's only safe-injection program, support for additional programs stood at 64 per cent.

The survey of 1,407 Canadians was completed by Decima Research Aug. 21 for the Privy Council Office. It is considered accurate to within 2.4 percentage points 19 times out of 20.

The country was split on the best way to treat drug addiction, with 45 per cent of Canadians saying that "enforcing the law and punishing drug users" was the best way to proceed and 32 per cent opposed the law-and-order approach. And seven in 10 also said Ottawa should emphasize prevention, enforcement and treatment, rather

See PUBLIC AHEAD A2

Pollsters get the thumbs down, poll shows, B6

Premature paunch threatens health of five-year-olds

BY SHARON KIRKEY

OTTAWA — Five-year-olds are developing middle-age paunches — a bleak sign that children are not only getting heavier, they're packing on the worst kind of fat.

Abdominal obesity increased more than 65 per cent among U.S. children between 1988 and 2004, according to the first national study to track trends in belly fat in children.

Tease out specific age groups "and those increases only grow more alarming," says co-author Dr. Stephen Cook, an assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of Rochester Medical School.

Among 18- to 19-year-old girls, the relative increase in abdominal obesity was 126 per cent over the study period, and 84 per cent for two- to five-year-old boys.

"We had these really significant increases in central fat, especially among adolescents," Cook says.

The study is published today in the journal *Pediatrics*.

See BELLY FAT A2

Junk food has 'double whammy' for schools, A3

Virtual worms crawl through 3-D medical images to aid analysis

Simon Fraser University-created technology gives medical researchers a peek inside patients

BY WENCY LEUNG
VANCOUVER 30N

Computer scientists at Simon Fraser University have created virtual worms that crawl through medical images of blood vessels, air passages and spinal cords, offering medical researchers a non-invasive and detailed peek inside their patients.

Assistant professor Ghassan Hamarneh and graduate student Chris McIntosh developed the "3-D crawlers" to help medical researchers analyse three-dimensional images taken using computer-aided tomography, or CAT, scans and magnetic reso-

nance imaging, or MRIs.

On a computer screen, the virtual worms can navigate the images, allowing clinicians to follow their journey through tubular structures like blood vessels and spinal cords.

"The idea is that we wanted to create something that would be intuitive to the doctors," Hamarneh said. "These virtual crawlers, they are put inside these 3-D worlds and you can imagine they are sensing the world around them."

The technology is somewhat similar to that used in interactive games, but Hamarneh and McIntosh are among the first to create artificial life



Chris McIntosh (left) and Ghassan Hamarneh (right) have developed virtual '3-D crawlers.'

for medical applications. Their worms can virtually "feel" different types of tissue in the body, according to the colours or light

See RESEARCHERS ARE A2

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