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MONDAY

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Better job opportunities.
An unpopular war.
Pressure from family.
They've all led to ...

THE LOSS OF THE BLACK SOLDIER

By Lolita C. Baldor
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The number of blacks joining the military has plunged by more than one-third since the Afghanistan and Iraq wars began. Other job prospects are soaring and relatives of potential recruits increasingly are discouraging them from joining the armed services.

According to data obtained by The Associated Press, the decline covers all four military services for active duty recruits. The drop is even more dramatic when National Guard and Reserve recruiting is included.

The findings reflect the growing unpopularity of the wars, particularly among family members and other adults who exert influence over high school and college students considering the military as a place to serve their country, further their education or build a career.

Walking past the Army recruiting station in downtown Washington, D.C., this past week, Sean Glover said he has done all he can to talk black relatives out of joining the military.

"I don't think it's a good time. I don't support the government's efforts here and abroad," said Glover, 36. "There's other ways you can pay for college. There's other ways you can get your life together. Joining the Army, the military, comes at a very high price."

The message comes as no surprise to the Pentagon. At the Defense Department, efforts are under way to increase

the size of the Army and Marine Corps so the country can better wage what the military believes will be a long battle against terrorism.

"The global war on terror has taken its toll, no question," said Curt Gilroy, the Pentagon's director of accession policy.

Marine Commandant Gen. James T. Conway agreed that the bloodshed in Iraq — where more than 3,540 U.S. troops have died — is the biggest deterrent for prospective recruits.

"The daily death toll that comes out is, I think, causing people who are the influencers of young men and women in America to take a second look," he said. "So I think that's probably the single most dominant feature."

According to Pentagon data, there were nearly 51,500 new black recruits for active duty and reserves in 2001. That number fell to less than 32,000 in 2006, a 38 percent decline.

When only active duty troops are counted, the number of black recruits went from more than 31,000 in 2002 to about 23,600 in 2006, almost one-quarter fewer.

The decline is particularly stark for the Army. Blacks represented about 23 percent of the active Army's enlisted recruits in 2000, but 12.4 percent in 2006.

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BY THE NUMBERS

32,000

Number of black recruits for active duty and reserves in 2006

51,500

Number of black recruits for active duty and reserves in 2001

23,600

Number of black recruits for just active duty in 2006

31,000

Number of black recruits for just active duty in 2002

12.4 percent

Percentage of blacks among the Army's active enlisted recruits in 2006

23 percent

Percentage of blacks among the Army's active enlisted recruits in 2000



James T. Conway

'Chemical Ali' will meet the gallows

Saddam-era officials sentenced for Kurdish massacre in late '80s

By Sinan Salaheddin and Omar Sinan
Associated Press Writers

BAGHDAD — Saddam Hussein's cousin, known as "Chemical Ali," and two other regime officials were sentenced Sunday to hang for slaughtering up to 180,000 Kurdish men, women and children with chemical weapons, artillery barges and mass executions two decades ago.

Two other defendants were sentenced to life in prison for their roles in the 1987-1988 crackdown, known as "Operation Anfal." A sixth defendant was acquitted for lack of evidence. Death sentences are automatically appealed.

The most notorious defendant was Saddam's cousin Ali Hassan al-Majid,



Ali Hassan al-Majid

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The Associated Press

Where does this man belong?

The executive branch, right? Not exactly, says the White House

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Democratic senators on Sunday chided Vice President Dick Cheney for declaring his office exempt from sections of a presidential order involving matters of national security. Republicans, more cautiously, said the matter deserves review.

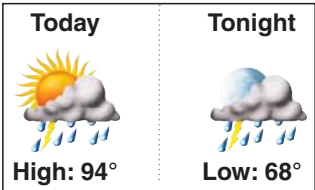
At issue is a requirement that executive

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Bond plan would speed up Marietta road projects — but only by months

By Michael French
Marietta Daily Journal Staff Writer

MARIETTA — In a highly unusual move, the city is going to great lengths to speed up its road improvement projects, but neither Cobb nor any other cities say they plan to follow Marietta.

City officials earlier this month unveiled a heretofore-unknown plan in hopes of issuing a \$9.8 million bond through the Downtown Marietta Development Authority to speed up construc-

tion on five city road improvement projects funded with revenue from the September 2005 voter-approved 1 percent Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax.

On June 14, the downtown development authority board voted 6-2, with ex-officio board members Marietta Mayor Bill Dunaway and Cobb Commission Chairman Sam Olens in dissent, to postpone action on the bonds until a special-called meeting at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday.

The city cannot issue revenue bonds without approval from the downtown

development authority, which is vexed over talk by state Rep. Steve "Thunder" Tumlin (R-Marietta) of changing its structure to make it more accountable to City Council.

To obtain a speed-up bond, the city would borrow money against future SPLOST revenue, which it would use to repay the bond over the next four years. With bond money in hand, the city could finance SPLOST projects early

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