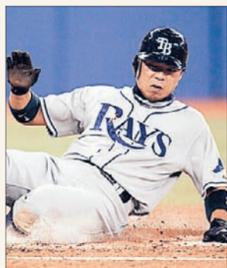


In the know



RAYS BREAK UP JAYS' FIVE-GAME WINNING STREAK

Solid hitting from Akinori Iwamura, above, helped Tampa Bay overcome Toronto 5-4, and Andy Sonnanstine won his fourth straight start. **Sports, 1C**

Radiohead elicits quiet adulation

The tech-nerdy quintet stays relatively downbeat with lesser-known tracks for a nearly sold-out Ford Amphitheatre. **Entertainment, 2B**

School Board lays out search plan

The board informally decides to choose among five finalists to replace superintendent Clayton Wilcox by late September. **Local & State, 1B**

VA official says sorry for shushing

The top mental health official apologizes to a House committee for starting an e-mail about suicide data with a "Shh." **Nation, 4A**

Thousands flee Chilean volcano

Authorities evacuate the last of the residents near the Chaiten volcano, which has been erupting for five days after 9,370 dormant years. **Times 2, 6A**

Special counsel is under investigation

Investigators raid the office and home of the U.S. special counsel, who is accused of brushing off whistle-blower cases and retaliating against his own staff. **Times 2, 6A**

Georgia resumes lethal injections

A man convicted of kidnapping and shooting his girlfriend dies. States had suspended the practice for more than seven months pending a Supreme Court review. **Times 2, 6A**

Energy bill shines kindly on some

Florida's latest energy bill awaits only the governor's signature. He's sold on it, but who are the big winners? We parse the dense bill. **Business, 1D**

Think French treat for Mother's Day

The little crepe goes a long way: sweet to savory, simple to elegant. It doesn't hurt that they're also easy and economical. **Taste, 1E**

TODAY'S WEATHER

Mostly sunny

 8 a.m. 71° Noon 85° 4 p.m. 89° 8 p.m. 80°
 0% rain chance. More, 2A

tampabay.com

No, Speed Racer, no

The film remake of the animated classic is sensory overload, resulting in a big annoying blur, film critic Steve Persall says at **blogs.tampabay.com/movies**.

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FLORIDA'S BEST NEWSPAPER

S Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Indiana

Clinton **51%**

99% of precincts reporting

Obama **49%**

North Carolina

Obama **56%**

99% of precincts reporting

Clinton **42%**

POLITICS.TAMPABAY.COM FOR THE LATEST PRIMARY RESULTS

Obama takes N.C.; Ind. goes to Clinton



Getty Images

Presidential hopeful Hillary Rodham Clinton had hoped to build on her record for winning big states, but the margin of her loss in North Carolina put that into question.



Associated Press

Presidential hopeful Barack Obama had appeared vulnerable going into Tuesday's contests after racially divisive comments by his former pastor led to an uproar.

Obama solidifies his position as the Democrats' front-runner.

BY ADAM C. SMITH
Times Political Editor

Hillary Rodham Clinton wanted a "game changer," but Tuesday may prove to be a game ender.

After the roughest three weeks of his presidential campaign, Barack Obama cemented his front-runner status with a double digit win in North Carolina's Democratic primary and a narrow loss in Indiana, a state widely seen as must-win for Clinton.

Analysis

Even though Clinton eked out a victory early today, her momentum was halted. Her last grasp at the nomination may hinge on counting Florida's officially meaningless primary.

"Some were saying that North Carolina would be a game changer in this election," Obama said in Raleigh, N.C., referring to Clinton. "But today, what North Carolina decided is that the only game that needs changing is the one in Washington, D.C."

"You stood up to the cynics, and the doubters, and the naysayers when we

were up and when we were down," he said. "Because you still believe that this is our moment, and our time, for change — tonight we stand less than 200 delegates away from securing the Democratic nomination for president of the United States."

The last big states to weigh in on the tumultuous Democratic primary may finally have settled this long race. Having looked in recent weeks ever more vulnerable, Obama broke through as the night's big winner.

» See **PRIMARIES, 12A**

Democrats move boldly in S. Florida

House seats held by anti-Castro stalwarts attract strong rivals.

BY DAVID ADAMS
Times Latin America Correspondent

HIALEAH — In a packed social center in the heart of South Florida's most Republican city, elderly Cuban-American voters warmly greet a congressional candidate.

The city's longtime former mayor, Raul Martinez, is a familiar face. But he's no Republican.

Instead, he is leading a Democratic challenge that hopes to break the Republican stranglehold on Miami's large Cuban-American vote in congressional elections this fall.

Martinez, 59, and two other Democrats — Joe Garcia, 44, former chairman of the Miami-Dade County Democratic Party, and Annette Taddeo, 40, a Colombian-American businesswoman — are mounting the most formidable effort in years to alter the political face of South Florida. Victories in any of the contests could lead to significant changes.



ATOYIA DEANS | Times

Golden Villa Motel owner Ken Christman says he's happy legislators passed rules making it tougher to appraise land at "highest and best use." "I could never figure out how they could tax you on something you're not," he says.

Business owners hail tax change

A bill would alter how waterfront is assessed.

BY MIKE DONILA
Times Staff Writer

CLEARWATER — Ken Christman's taxes were \$5,000 per year when he bought the 14-room Golden Villa Motel on Clearwater Beach in 1996.

Today, they've climbed to more than \$18,000.

That's largely due to the state's "highest and best use" policy, which taxes waterfront land based on what could be built on the property — not what's actually there. So a small mom-and-

pop beach motel's property could be assessed at the same rate as land sold to build a giant condominium tower.

But Christman is hoping a proposal passed Friday by the Florida Legislature will halt his ever-increasing tax bill.

State lawmakers say it will, and small-business owners up and down the state's shorelines are ecstatic. But local leaders are still wrestling with just what the legislation will mean for tax rolls.

» See **TAXES, 8A**

His job: connect the dead with the living



SUE CARLTON
 scarlton@sptimes.com

In a squat, burglar-barred building at the edge of downtown Tampa, in the Unclaimed Bodies Unit of the Medical Examiner's Office, Prudencio Vallejo works to find the living to take care of the dead.

At 64, he has done this for 42 years now, searching for family, friends or funds to see to the remains of those who died with nothing. Or at least seemed to.

Everybody's got somebody somewhere, he likes to say. Every old man who dies alone in a nursing home, every homeless person, every loner. The job of his two-man unit is to find them.

His office is plastered with lively pictures of his wife, sons and grandkids, his desk spread with papers of the dead. When he started, they might get 10 or 20 cases a year. This

year, they'll likely see a thousand. The world has changed.

The county used to bury its indigent, but last October it officially switched to cremation at a government rate of \$387 per body. The ashes are spread in the Gulf of Mexico, and the mortuary maintains a list of names, along with the longitude and latitude of the gulf location, should they be needed.

» See **LIVING, 8A**

Storm deaths reach 22,000

Bush urges rulers in Myanmar to allow aid workers to enter as many are cut off.

Associated Press

YANGON, Myanmar — International aid began to trickle into Myanmar on Tuesday, but the stricken Irrawaddy delta, the nation's rice bowl where 22,000 people perished and 41,000 are missing, remained cut off from the world.

In Yangon, the former capital, soldiers from the repressive military regime were out on the streets in large numbers for the first time since Cyclone Nargis hit over the weekend, helping to clear away rubble. Buddhist monks and Catholic nuns wielded axes and long knives to remove ancient, fallen trees that were once the city's pride.

However, coastal areas of the delta worst hit by the high winds and tidal surges were out of reach for aid workers, isolated by the flooding and road damage in south Myanmar (pronounced MEE-ahn-mahr).

The White House said Tuesday the United States would send more than \$3-million to help victims, after an initial emergency contribution of \$250,000. President Bush continued a campaign to pressure the military government to allow fuller access to international relief teams and private charity groups.

His message mixed a new offer of U.S. help with renewed criticism of a government the United States has denounced as one of the world's most repressive. Some international aid workers and foreign leaders said they feared that political pressure could make it more difficult to deliver aid in a timely manner.

The United Nations' World Food Program said international aid began to flow, with 800 tons of food getting through to the first of nearly 1-million people left homeless by the cyclone.

Concerns mounted over the

» See **MYANMAR, 5A**