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THE GREATEST RAID

40 minute mission: Timeline, history of the bin Laden raid

By Bob Drogin, Christi Parsons and Ken Dilanian
TRIBUNE WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — The nail-biting moment, the period when absolute disaster loomed, came at the very start. About two dozen Navy SEALs and other U.S. commandos were supposed to rope down into a Pakistani residential compound from a pair of specially modified Black Hawk helicopters in the predawn hours Monday, race into two buildings, and capture or kill Osama bin Laden. One chopper stalled as it hovered between the compound's high walls, unable to sustain its lift, and thudded into the dirt.

Half a world away in the White House Situation Room, the president and his war council crowded around a table covered with briefing papers and keyboards, and watched nervously as video feeds streamed in. The special forces team needed a rescue chopper. Gunfire was blazing around them. No one wanted another "Black Hawk Down" debacle.

"A lot of people were holding their breath," recalled John Brennan, the president's counterterrorism adviser.

The extraordinary drama surrounding the killing of bin

Hunting down Osama bin Laden

The raid that killed al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden took shape after detainees identified a bin Laden courier.

First information

- After 9/11, CIA chases leads about bin Laden's inner circle
- Detainees repeatedly mention one courier's pseudonym, identifying him as one of the few trusted by bin Laden; true name, location unknown
- Courier's true identity learned in 2007
- Two years later, locations where courier and his brother operate in Pakistan are learned

Narrowing in

- **August 2010** Courier's residence found: high-security compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan
- **September 2010** U.S. thinks bin Laden may be hiding in compound
- **February 2011** U.S. thinks intelligence is strong enough to begin developing plan for going after bin Laden
- **March 2011** First of five National Security Council meetings on capturing or killing bin Laden; other meetings: March 29, April 12, April 19, April 28

The operation

- **April 29, 2011, 8:20 a.m. EDT** Obama authorizes operation
- **May 1, 1 p.m.** Top advisors gather at White House
- **Around 3 p.m. (midnight in Pakistan)** Helicopters heard over Abbottabad
- Two dozen Navy SEALs drop into high-walled compound; inside for 40 minutes
- Bin Laden killed in last five or 10 minutes of siege; shot twice in the head on third floor of main building

Inside the compound in Abbottabad

- Built in 2005; about 3,000 sq. ft. (279 sq. m) of space; but no telephone or Internet service to avoid detection
- Two men lived on first floor
- Exterior walls topped with barbed wire



Did Pakistan know about bin Laden's hideout in small city?

By Nahal Toosi and Kathy Cannon
ASSOCIATED PRESS

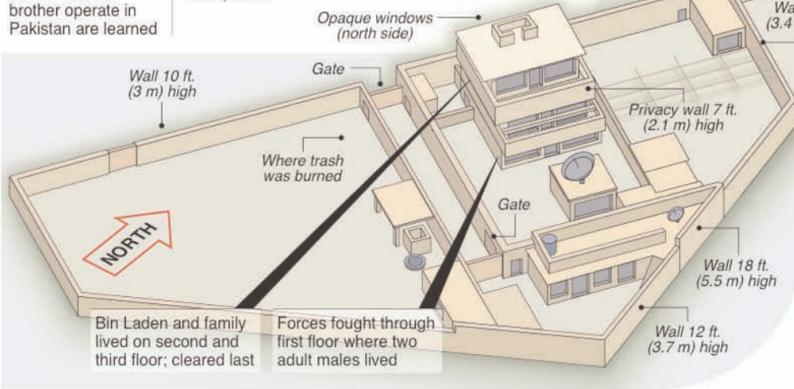
ABBOTTABAD, Pakistan — Osama bin Laden made his final stand in a small Pakistani city where three army regiments with thousands of soldiers are based not far from the capital — a location that is increasing suspicions in Washington that Islamabad may have been sheltering him.

The U.S. acted alone in Monday's helicopter raid, did not inform Pakistan until it was over and pointedly did not thank Pakistan at the end of a wildly successful operation. All this suggests more strain ahead in a relationship that was already suffering because of U.S. accusations that the Pakistanis are supporting Afghan militants, and Pakistani anger over American drone attacks and spy activity.

Pakistani intelligence agencies are normally very sharp in sniffing out the presence of foreigners in small cities.

Pakistan's president denied suspicions that his country's security forces may have sheltered Osama bin Laden.

Asif Ali Zardari says Pakistani forces weren't involved in Monday's operation against bin Laden but that Pakistan's "decade of cooperation" with



Outcome and aftermath All times EDT

- One U.S. helicopter lost because of mechanical failure; destroyed for security purposes
- Along with bin Laden, three adult males killed; bin Laden's son and two al-Qaida facilitators
- Unidentified woman killed; two others injured
- **3:32 p.m.** Obama returns for update
- **3:50 p.m.** Obama told bin Laden appears to be one of those killed during raid
- **11:35 p.m.** After confirmation, Obama announces in televised address that U.S. forces killed bin Laden and are in custody of his body
- Bin Laden's body put aboard the USS Carl Vinson, then placed in the North Arabian Sea

Sources: U.S. Government, The White House, AP, Reuters, ESRI, National Journal.com

Graphic: Robert Dorrell, Judy Treible, Melina Yingling

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Acampo resident John Vinson displays about 20 flags at Lodi Airport on Highway 99 Frontage Road to celebrate the death of Osama bin Laden on Monday afternoon. Every year, he displays 400 flags in West Sacramento to commemorate Sept. 11.



MAGGIE CREAMER/NEWS-SENTINEL

'Won't let the public forget' Acampo man displays row of 20 flags to commemorate death of bin Laden

By Maggie Creamer
NEWS-SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

It all started when John Vinson hung a flag on an overpass to mourn lives lost on Sept. 11, 2001.

Since then, Vinson's flag collection has grown to more than 400, and he has displayed them every year on the anniversary. Last year, he flew the flags for two days in a large field in West Sacramento with lights shining on them at night.

"I want to keep the memory alive. It was a horrible day. I'll never forget it. And I won't let the public forget it," Vinson

said. On Monday afternoon, Vinson, an Acampo resident, drove his pick-up truck to Lodi Airport near Peltier and Highway 99 Frontage roads and displayed 20 flags. He felt compelled to mark Osama bin Laden's death.

"The war isn't over. We just got the big cheese," he said.

Besides American flags, Vinson has flags from all of the military units, two honoring those on United Airlines Flight 93, one with the names of all the civilians who died on 9/11 and another of all of the

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'It's about time' Lodi's military community reacts to bin Laden's death

By Jordan Guinn
NEWS-SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

Osama bin Laden's death was met with celebration by members of Lodi's extended military family on Monday.

"It's about time," said Marcia Dempsey, coordinator of Lodi Support Our Troops, a nonprofit organization that operates charity drives for soldiers, including the Holiday Cheer Box Drive, which provides toiletries, books and supplies for servicemen and women. "I've always had a feeling we knew where he was or at least should've known. We have a lot of

smart people in the military."

Although he agrees bin Laden's death is a significant milestone in the "War on Terror," 1st Lt. Will Martin, of the California National Guard in Sacramento, said more work remains. Martin is the National Guard's public affairs spokesperson for the area, including Lodi.

"In many ways bin Laden is the face of terror," he said. "But the war is still going."

Troops are being instructed to remain on a high level of security in the hours since the announcement of bin

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LOCALS REACT TO OSAMA BIN LADEN'S DEATH



Maria Rios Galt
"He deserved it. They should kill (Libyan leader Moammar) Gadhafi and the rest of them. That will make the war stop if they kill them. I'm glad they got him after hunting for 10 or 11 years."



Dennis Kelley Lodi
Former Marine
"It's great. They need to go in there and clean house. They need to not be so political and stop monkeying around. There's too much money over there floating around, and everyone is worried about their interests."



Jurisah Sylvia Stockton
"We have been dumping a lot of money over there. I think we should pull out of Afghanistan. Afghanistan is primitive and hasn't evolved. We don't need to interfere with that. We need to stay over here and focus on our own borders."



Jeff Sylvia Stockton
"The U.S. should focus on the U.S. first before we go into other countries. We've got to take care of our own."



John Baker Morada
Construction
"It's a great thing. I think we need to keep the pressure on. We cut the head off the principle but we have a long way to go, unfortunately."

How are local schools teaching about the raid on bin Laden?

By Jennifer Bonnett
NEWS-SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

How do you feel about the killing of Osama bin Laden? Do you think it was justified? Why or why not?

Was there another way the U.S. could have handled this? How do you think al-Qaida will respond?

Those were among the journal questions Tokay High School social science teacher Matt Huiras presented to students Monday.

"I devoted my day to this topic in all of my classes, as it pertains to, obviously, U.S. history, but also my geography classes, as we study



DAN EVANS/NEWS-SENTINEL

Tokay High School social studies teacher Matthew Huiras, right, explains to juniors in his U.S. history class that the mission that led to the killing of Osama bin Laden may not necessarily have been a mission to kill, during his class on Monday.

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