

FINAL K

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Arizona Daily Star

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Tracking of key aide led US to bin Laden

ID of courier, phone call guided agents to hideout

Al-Qaida leader's body is flown to ship, buried at sea

By Adam Goldman and Matt Apuzzo

WASHINGTON — When one of Osama bin Laden's most trusted aides picked up the phone last year, he unknowingly led U.S. pursuers to the doorstep of his boss, the world's most wanted terrorist.

That phone call, recounted Monday by a U.S. official, ended a years-long search for bin Laden's personal courier, the key break in a worldwide manhunt. The courier, in turn, led U.S. intelligence to a walled compound in northeast Pakistan, where a team of Navy SEALs shot bin Laden to death.

The violent final minutes were the culmination of years of intelligence work. Inside the CIA team hunting bin Laden, it always was clear that bin Laden's vulnerability was his couriers. He was too smart to let al-Qaida foot soldiers, or even his senior commanders, know his hideout. But if he wanted to get his messages out, somebody had to carry them, someone bin Laden trusted with his life.

Three U.S. officials said Monday the courier was a Kuwait-born man named Sheikh Abu Ahmed.

Ahmed was a shadowy figure for U.S. intelligence, someone it took many years to identify. For a long time, intelligence officials knew him only by his nom de guerre, Abu Ahmed al-Somali.

Ahmed and his brother were killed in the same predator raid Monday that left bin Laden dead.

In secret CIA prison in Eastern Europe years ago, al-Qaida No. 3 leader, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, gave away hints the nicknames of several of bin Laden's couriers.



The president, Cabinet members and top national security officials hustled for a briefing on the Osama bin Laden mission on Sunday in the White House's Situation Room. Those receiving the update, from left, included Vice President Joe Biden, the president's aide Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs (standing at left), Air Force Brig. Gen. Brad Webb of the Joint Special Operations Command, center; Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton; and Defense Secretary Robert Gates, lower right. The White House photo deliberately obscured a document in front of Clinton.

BIN LADEN RAID

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On StartNet: Find more coverage of the death of Osama bin Laden, including articles, videos and photo galleries at azstartnet.com/Abd

Location of bin Laden makes US think Pakistan knew he was there

By Kathy Gannon and Isabel Truini

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 reportedly did not think Pakistan

the end of a widely 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.

For years, Western intelligence has said bin Laden was most likely holed up in a cave along the Pak-

istan-Afghan border, a remote region of soaring mountains and thick forests where the Pakistan army has little presence. But the 10-year hunt for the world's most-wanted man ended in a white-washed, three-story house in a middle-class area of Abbottabad, a leafy resort city of 400,000 people nestled in pine-forested hills less than 35 miles from the national capital, Islamabad.

Sen. Carl Levin, the chairman of

Medical pot still illegal under federal law, US attorney warns

By Howard Fischer

PHOENIX — The chief federal prosecutor in Arizona warned patients, dispensary operators and cultivators of medical marijuana Monday they still could wind up behind bars.

In a letter to the state health di-

rector, U.S. Attorney Dennis Burke said he intends to follow "guidance" from superiors in Washington not to focus on seriously ill patients who use marijuana as part of a doctor's treatment plan.

"The public should understand, however, that even clear and unambiguous compliance with the

Arizona Medical Marijuana Act does not render possession or distribution of marijuana lawful under federal statutes," Burke wrote to Will Henable, director of the Arizona Department of Health Services.

Burke particularly cautioned those who grow marijuana, even if

they have a cultivation license from the state. Anyone involved, including property owners, landlords and organizations that finance dispensaries, risks federal criminal prosecution and having assets seized.

"This compliance with Arizona laws and regulations does not

provide a safe harbor, nor immunity from federal prosecution," Burke wrote.

Henable, who sought Burke's input, said his agency will continue issuing cards allowing those with a doctor's recommendation to pos-

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