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BC-MCT-PAGEONE-BJT — wire, managing editors (1600 words)

McClatchy-Tribune News Service
Page One Budget for Monday, May 3, 2010

Updated at 10 p.m. EDT (0200 UTC).

Additional news stories appear on the [MCT-NEWS-BJT](#).

PAGE ONE

British oil company says it is 'absolutely responsible' for stopping leak

[OILSPILL:LA](#)—The giant British oil company BP LLC, whose deep-water well is gushing thousands of gallons of oil daily into the Gulf of Mexico, said Monday that it was "absolutely responsible" for stopping the leak, cleaning up the oil on the water's surface and any resulting environmental damage.

"This not our accident, but it's our responsibility," BP's chief executive, Tony Hayward, said in a round of news media appearances. "And where there are legitimate claims for business interruption, we will make them good."

1150 (with trims) by Ashley Powers, Louis Sahagun and Jim Tankersley in Venice, La. **MOVED**

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Also moving as:

[OILSPILL:WA](#)—1200 (with trims) by Curtis Morgan, Anita Lee and Steve Rothaus in Gulfport, Miss. **MOVED**

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Times Square investigators focus on finding bomb-filled car's owner

[NYCARBOMB-1ST-LEDE:LA](#)—Police investigating an attempted car bombing in Times Square sought the owner of the explosives-laden SUV on Monday to determine if he worked alone or was part of an international or domestic conspiracy, while videos they had hoped would provide critical clues failed to crack the case.

As the probe into the Saturday evening incident expanded across at least three states — New York, Connecticut and Pennsylvania — administration officials said it was too early to draw any conclusions about the legitimacy of a claim of responsibility from the Pakistani Taliban, or to speculate if the attack was a case of domestic or international terrorism.

"No leads are being discarded," Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said, but she added, "This is an open investigation that really is in its beginning stages."

950 (with trims) by Tina Susman and Geraldine Baum in New York. **MOVED**

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Also moving as:

[NYCARBOMB:ND](#)—1250 (with trims) by Anthony M. DeStefano and Robert E. Kessler in New York. **MOVED**

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Taliban's claim of responsibility for N.Y. bomb attempt is met with skepticism

[PAKISTAN-TALIBAN:LA](#)—Pakistani Taliban videos claiming responsibility for a car bomb found in downtown New York during the weekend and vowing to strike American cities with suicide attacks were greeted with skepticism by analysts Monday, who said the militant group lacks the capability and reach to carry out such missions in the U.S.

A 71-second video posted on the Internet claimed that the Pakistani Taliban planned an attack in Times Square in retaliation for the U.S. drone missile strike that killed the insurgent group's leader, Baitullah Mahsud, last August.

New York police have said there is no evidence to support the Pakistani Taliban's claim of responsibility for a sport-utility vehicle found in Times Square on Saturday carrying materials including plastic cans filled with gasoline, M-88 firecrackers, three propane tanks, wires and two alarm clocks.

750 (with trims) by Alex Rodriguez and Laura King in Islamabad. **MOVED**

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Also moving as:

[PAKISTAN-TALIBAN:WA](#)—850 (with trims) by Saeed Shah and Warren P. Strobel in Islamabad, Pakistan. (CANADA OUT) **MOVED**

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Three years after devastating tornado, renewal hasn't come easy in Greensburg, Kan.

[GREENSBURG-CORRECTION:KC](#)—Step up to the rooftop garden of the Silo Eco-Home and look north. See how much Greensburg has changed in the three years since it was nearly wiped clean by an EF-5 tornado.

Look west and you will see the state-of-the-art hospital. It is loaded with cutting-edge green features, such as a wind turbine, gray water recycling, heat-recovery systems and a concrete-reinforced conference room with a three-day supply of food and water.

Look east and you will see the dramatic passive-solar rooflines of the school that soon will educate children from all of Kiowa County.

What you will not see, however, are trees.

Most of Greensburg's trees were hauled away after the storm. Around town, barren zombie trees jut from the ground at ghoulish angles, a reminder of what Greensburg lost on May 4, 2007, and what it cannot readily replace.

Thirteen people died that night. Five hundred people—more than a third of the town's population — moved away

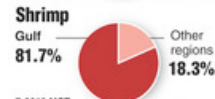
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Threatened business

Half the total value of the U.S. oyster crop and most of the value of the shrimp crop were produced the Gulf of Mexico. Origin of U.S. oyster and shrimp landings, 2008.



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Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Graphic: Jay Lee, Los Angeles Times

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afterward. As for that other greening of Greensburg, it will be years before residents can look out the windows of their new energy-efficient homes and see the foliage in all its pre-storm glory.

“We’re a very tender community emotionally right now,” said Mayor Bob Dixon. “We’ve been running on adrenaline for three years, and now our emotions are catching up with us. Our loss has been internalized for three years, and it hasn’t spilled out because we’ve been uplifting each other by being busy.

“We had a cause. Now we are back to so-called normalcy.”

1700 by Aaron Barnhart in Greensburg, Kan. [MOVED](#)

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United and Continental join forces in \$3 billion merger

[UNITED-CONTINENTAL:TB](#)—United Airlines and Continental Airlines announced early Monday morning they were combining operations in a \$3-billion merger, forming the world’s largest airline.

The deal is the culmination of a lengthy search by United CEO Glenn Tilton for a partner that would bolster his carrier’s global network and promote consolidation in a fragmented industry plagued by chronic losses.

The combined airline would have annual revenue of \$29 billion, based on 2009 results, and hold an unrestricted cash balance of about \$7.4 billion. The carriers said in a press release Monday they expected to complete the transaction in the fourth quarter of 2010.

550 by Julie Johnsson in Chicago. [MOVED](#)

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[UNITED-CONTINENTAL:LA](#)—900 (with trims) by W.J. Hennigan. [MOVED](#)

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Merger is ultimate triumph for United’s oft-reviled CEO

[UNITED-CONTINENTAL-TILTON:TB](#)—Even by the airline industry’s operatic standards, Glenn Tilton’s eight-year stewardship of United Airlines has been extraordinary.

When he arrived in 2002, fresh from a long career at Texaco, wags chided him as an outsider, saying he would never survive. Wall Street badgered, customers howled and merger partners balked. Chicago-based United limped through a succession of bruising external crises stretching from the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks to the Great Recession and lost a staggering \$11.7 billion under his watch.

But on Monday, Tilton, 62, is enjoying the last laugh as United and Continental announced a merger that will make the one-time oilman the chairman of the world’s largest airline.

1650 (with trims) by Michael Oneal and Julie Johnsson in Chicago. [MOVED](#)

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Left out of the M&A party, US Airways sees options narrow

[UNITED-CONTINENTAL-USAIR:PH](#)—Now that United and Continental Airlines hope to tie the knot in a stock deal worth almost \$3.2 billion, what lies ahead for US Airways?

Another attempt at consolidation, possibly with American Airlines?

An alliance with another carrier to sell seats on each other’s planes to attract more passengers, especially business fliers?

The new United-Continental, with expected annual revenues of \$29 billion, based in Chicago and serving 144 million passengers a year, will put pressure on American and US Airways — the last two remaining “legacy” network carriers — to seek alliances or a merger.

But many analysts do not see a logical or easy fit for US Airways and expect it to remain a stand-alone carrier in the near term.

800 (with trims) by Linda Loyd in Philadelphia. [MOVED](#)

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[UNITED-CONTINENTAL-USAIR:TB](#)—500 by Wailin Wong in Chicago. [MOVED](#)

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Where did your food come from? Industry wants you to know

[FOOD-TRACKING-BIZPLUS:SL](#)—The Askinosie Chocolate factory sits at the edge of a downtown street in southwest Missouri, but its flavor comes from thousands of miles away, and its customers can find out where — exactly.

Each Askinosie chocolate bar bears a “choc-o-lot” code, a series of numbers that customers can plug into the company’s website revealing where the cocoa beans in that bar were grown and who grew them. The idea is to introduce customers to the farmer in Ecuador, Mexico or the Philippines who cultivated the bar’s essential ingredient.

In the food industry, this ability to track an ingredient from origin to destination is known as traceability, and for Askinosie, it lies at the heart of his operating philosophy. But with hundreds of people sickened by food-borne illness in a spate of recent outbreaks, traceability has also become a critical food industry goal.

As the food industry works on implementing traceability, its efforts have also produced the latest food marketing tool.

1450 (with trims) by Georgina Gustin in Springfield, Mo. (Moved as a business story.) [MOVED](#)

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For resends or more information, contact the MCT News Desk: 202-383-6080, news@mctinfoservices.com.

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MCT Photo Service: 202-383-6099, mct-photostaff@mctinfoservices.com

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