

Texas to go solo on trial for drug

Companies, state fail to agree on partnership to research hallucinogen for mental health

By James Osborne
WASHINGTON BUREAU

The Texas Legislature's decision last year to invest \$50 million in taxpayer money on a clinical trial for the powerful hallucinogen

ibogaine came amid a rising tide of enthusiasm around psychedelics.

Former Gov. Rick Perry extolled its benefits for the treatment of drug addiction and other mental health issues, saying he

took ibogaine to overcome anxiety and insomnia caused by head injuries sustained in his youth. U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. suggested in June that federal approval for the drugs would come within 12 months.

Ten months later, the Trump administration has shown little progress on that front. And Tex-

as' Republican-backed effort to get the schedule one narcotic, which carries the same penalties as heroin, approved for medical use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, appears to be in turmoil.

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick and House Speaker Dustin Burrows announced last week that drug companies and state officials

have been unable to come to terms on what was supposed to be a lucrative public-private partnership to get ibogaine into U.S. pharmacies. They said the state's ibogaine research would go ahead without the drug companies, which were supposed to match the state's \$50 million investment and share a portion of

Drug continues on A2



Abdulnasser Alseddik/Associated Press

Yemeni soldiers patrol the Bab el-Mandeb Strait off the Arabian Peninsula on Sunday. Iran has threatened to restrict the strait.

Paxton targeted on hotel inquiry

Probe: 'Appearance of impropriety' was created by AG staff

By Aarón Torres
STAFF WRITER

Republican Sen. John Cornyn's campaign slammed attorney general and runoff rival Ken Paxton this week, seizing on an internal AG investigation that said his staff created an appearance of impropriety in handling state-booked hotel rooms.

The hotel episode has raised questions over what happened in January 2025 in Washington, whether Paxton donors were given special treatment and how GOP voters weigh it ahead of the May 26 vote.

Cornyn's senior adviser Matt Mackowiak accused Paxton of engaging in "illegal taxpayer spending" that benefited his financial backers and that those donors reimbursed the state for the accommodations only after auditors intervened.

Paxton campaign spokesman Nick Maddux on Friday dismissed reports about the hotel rooms as "a story no one will read" and referred other questions to the attorney general's office. It did not respond to follow-ups from Hearst Newspapers.

The escalation between the two Republicans seeking the U.S. Senate nomination stems from an internal AG inquiry. A summary reviewed by Hearst Newspapers said staff in Paxton's office reassigned hotel rooms, originally booked for official travel to Washington, to outside individuals, including Paxton political donors.

Some of those rooms went unpaid until the Texas comptroller began reviewing the agency's spending, prompting reimbursements and internal fallout.

According to the summary, senior officials in the AG's office said they were first alerted in March to "errors and mistakes" tied to the bookings, nearly a year after the trip.

They said neither Paxton nor his top deputy, First Assistant Attorney General Brent Webster,

Paxton continues on A2

Trump threatens Iran's infrastructure

Warning follows rescue of U.S. aviator after plane was shot down

By Matthew Lee, Bassem Mroue, Konstantin Toropin and Samy Magdy
ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEHRAN, Iran — President Donald Trump on Sunday made expletive-filled threats against Iran and its infrastructure if it doesn't open the Strait of Hormuz by his Tuesday deadline, after U.S. forces rescued a wounded aviator whose plane, shot down by Iran, fell behind enemy lines.

A defiant Iran struck infrastructure targets in neighboring Persian Gulf Arab countries and threatened to restrict another heavily used regional waterway, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait off the Arabian Peninsula.

Trump on social media

Mideast continues on A7



Ariel Schalit/Associated Press

Israeli security forces and rescue teams work on Sunday amid the rubble of a residential building in Haifa that was struck by an Iranian missile.

Loss of Air Force's 'crown jewel' plane limits U.S. edge in combat

By Sig Christenson
STAFF WRITER

When Iranian forces damaged a U.S. AWACS command-and-control plane sitting on the tarmac at a Saudi air base, they took out a jet often called the "crown jewel" of the Air Force.

The loss of even one AWACS — leaving just 15 in service worldwide — was a blow to the military's ability to project power and protect U.S. forces. An

AWACS (short for Airborne Warning and Control System) is a flying command center whose powerful radar and sensors can identify and track enemy planes and ships over a vast area.

The four-engine craft, a tricked-out military version of a Boeing 707 airliner, can transmit information on enemy movements and ensure that friendly aircraft don't mistake one another for an adversary, a vital function known as "de-conflic-

tion." The AWACS has been described as a "chess master" of the battle theater, an eye in the sky that knows where all the other chess pieces are and what they're up to.

Flying at altitudes up to 30,000 feet, the planes are much less vulnerable to counterstrikes than are U.S. ground radars, some of which have been damaged or destroyed by Iranian missiles or drones since the

AWACS continues on A3



Senior Airman Kevin Dunkleberger/U.S. Air Force

The Air Force's AWACS, also known as the E-3 Sentry, has been described as a "chess master" of the battle theater.

