

Experts: Man controlled robotic hand with thoughts

ROME (AP) — An Italian who lost his left forearm in a car crash was linked successfully to a robotic hand, allowing him to feel sensations in the artificial limb and control it with his thoughts, scientists said Wednesday.

During a one-month experiment conducted last year, 26-year-old Pierpaolo Petruzzello said he felt like his lost arm had grown back again, although he was only controlling a robotic hand that was not even attached to his body.

"It's a matter of mind, of concentration," Petruzzello said. "When you think of it as your hand and forearm, it all becomes easier."

Though similar experiments have been successful before, the European scientists who led the project said this was the first time a patient has been able to make such complex movements using his mind to control a biomechanical hand connected to his nervous system.

Iran releases 5 British sailors detained at sea

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran freed five British sailors detained last week when their racing yacht drifted accidentally into Iranian waters in the Persian Gulf. Britain said it was delighted with Wednesday's release and praised Tehran's handling of the incident.

The men arrived on shore in Dubai on Wednesday, flashing smiles, waving at the cameras and looking relaxed.

The 60-foot yacht was in the Persian Gulf on its way from Bahrain to Dubai on Nov. 25 for the start of its first offshore race when it ran into a problem with its propeller.

Officials: Iraq likely to postpone election

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq's scheduled January elections might be postponed by more than a month because of a dispute over an election law, officials said Wednesday, a delay that could threaten the planned U.S. withdrawal of combat troops.

Iraqi lawmakers have been working for months to pass a law needed to reform the election process, seeking to make it more representative of Iraq's ethnic and religious groups. It is unclear what a long delay would mean for the United States, which is scheduled to end combat missions in August.

Former Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, who heads a small bloc in parliament, said a preliminary proposal from various political factions calls for moving the election to Feb. 27, but it also could be further pushed to March 1.

Allawi told Al-Arabiya television that meetings were planned for today to look at possible new dates for the parliament election, which is scheduled for Jan. 16.

Earlier, Sandra Mitchell, the head of the United

Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq's electoral commission, suggested to parliament Speaker Ayad al-Samarie the election possibly even could be moved to March, the speaker said on his Web site.

Iraq's vice president has vetoed the law because he wanted more seats for Iraqis living abroad, most of whom are Sunnis. The minority party has seen its once-privileged status evaporate since the fall of Saddam Hussein.

President Barack Obama has ordered the withdrawal of all combat troops by Aug. 31, 2010, leaving up to 50,000 troops in advisory roles.

Under an Iraqi-U.S. security agreement, those remaining troops would leave by the end of 2011.

For now, the top U.S. commander in Iraq has said the pullout remains on schedule.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, a Shiite, and President Jalal Talabani, a Kurd, had a joint press conference Wednesday to call on the elections law to be passed.

"I have met with al-Maliki and our point of view is identical over the passing of the



ALAA AL-MARJANI • ASSOCIATED PRESS
Iraqi Shiite protesters chant slogans against the veto made by Iraq's Sunni Arab vice president Tariq al-Hashemi on the election law Nov. 20 in Najaf, Iraq.

elections law," Talabani said. Al-Maliki said if the elections law failed, it would be "the destruction of all we built in the political process."

Both Sunnis and Kurds criticized earlier versions of the legislation. The parliament amended the law with a version that pleased the Kurds but not the Sunnis.

Despite the mounting pressure, Sunni Vice President Tariq al-Hashemi gave no signs of changing his position

on vetoing the law if more parliamentary seats are not distributed.

"Time is running out and al-Hashemi is sticking to his position that he is not ready to give up the rights of the Iraqi people. The veto might be the last remaining option, if the current talks yield no results," said Abdul-Ilah Khazim, al-Hashemi's spokesman.

Though violence in Iraq has declined dramatically in recent years, Iraqi and U.S.

military officials have expressed concern that a delay in the election could destabilize the hard won security gains.

On Wednesday, an American airstrike in northeast Iraq killed one gunman after a joint U.S.-Iraqi foot patrol was attacked. The airstrike was called in after five gunmen attacked the patrol as it was searching a building in the town of Sadiyah in the volatile Diyala province, the U.S. military said in a statement.

But a police official said the gunmen opened fire on the soldiers, believing they were insurgents. A year earlier, the same house had been attacked by insurgents, the official said.

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(First published in The Hays Daily News November 26, 2009)

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF ELLIS COUNTY KANSAS CIVIL COURT DEPARTMENT
In the Matter of the Petition of: Robert Lee St. Peter To Change His/Her Name.

Case No. 09 CV 189 Pursuant to Chapter 60 NOTICE OF SUIT

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL WHO ARE OR MAY BE CONCERNED:

You are hereby notified that the above-named Robert Lee St. Peter filed his/her Petition in the above court on November 20, 2009 praying for judgment and decree changing his/her name from Robert Lee St. Peter to Trisha Lynn St. Peter, and that said Petition will be heard (or assigned) by the Court in Division, Ellis County Courthouse, 1204 Fort Street, Hays, Kansas 67601, on the 11th day of January, 2010, at 4:00 p.m. You are required to plead in response to the petition on or before January 11, 2010 in this Court.

If you fail to plead, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon the Petition.

Petitioner, Pro Se
306 West 33rd
Hays, Kansas 67601
785-625-0007

(Last published in The Hays Daily News December 10, 2009)

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