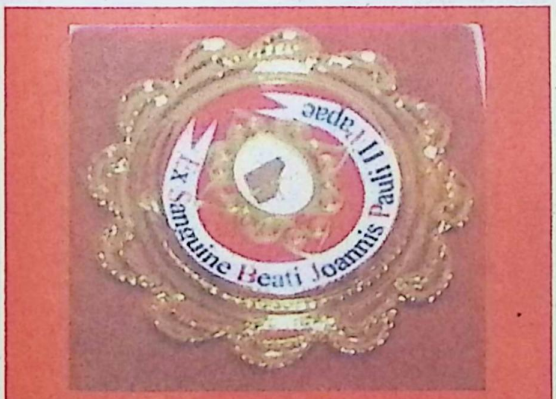


Another Senseless Attack

Maiduguri, Nigeria. A village lost many of its people because some miscreants believed that they were acting on behalf of their religion. Villagers say suspected Islamist extremists have attacked several farming settlements in Nigeria's northeast Borno state this week, killing 18 people and razing homes. Maiduguri is the birth place of Boko Haram, the terrorist network whose name means "Western education is forbidden." Mutah said eight people were killed in a neighboring village on January 22. He said Mude and Kwaljiri villages were destroyed, but residents escaped unharmed. Boko Haram has killed thousands of people in its four-year mission to impose Shariah law and attacks continue despite an 8-month-old state of emergency. Locals have formed vigilante groups to fight back but attacks have increased, likely in retaliation.



Holy Relics Stolen

Rome, Italy. Italian police are hunting for a stolen holy relic that contains the blood of Pope John Paul ll. It appears to have been taken during the burglary of a small chapel that was a place of special significance to the late Pope. The church of San Pietro della Ienca lies in an isolated spot in the mountains of central Abruzzo region. Over the weekend, thieves broke some protective iron bars and forced their way in through a window. They left the collection box, but took a crucifix and the priceless relic, which contains a piece of gauze once soaked in the blood of the late Pope - one of only three such relics in the world.



Alligator in an Airport

Chicago, USA. This might seem like a good opening to a joke but this strange incident is no laughing matter. Authorities have arrested a woman they believe left a small alligator at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport late last year. In a news release, Chicago police said 29-year-old Alexis Prokopchuk of suburban Oakbrook Terrace was charged with misdemeanor counts of reckless conduct and cruelty to animals. She was arrested Tuesday. The 2-foot-long alligator was spotted and captured in a baggage claim area on Nov. 1 of last year. Police recovered security footage that showed a woman with an alligator under her arm boarding a Chicago Transit Authority train, then chatting on a cellphone while the animal sat in her hand on her knee. An hour later, she disembarked at the airport.