

# Rebel 'eats heart' of Syria soldier: Report

AFP, Beirut

Human Rights Watch and the Syrian opposition National Coalition have condemned a gruesome video apparently showing a Syrian rebel fighter cutting out the heart of a regime soldier and eating it.

"International news agencies and social media websites have been circulating a video clip in which a person claiming to be a member of the rebels in Homs performs a horrific and inhumane act," the National Coalition said.

"The Syrian Coalition strongly condemns this act - if it is revealed to be true. The Coalition stresses that such an act contradicts the morals of the Syrian people, as well as the values and principles of the Free Syrian Army."

"It is not enough for Syria's opposition to condemn such behaviour or blame it on violence by the government," said Nadim Houry, Middle East deputy director at Human Rights Watch.

"The opposition forces need to act firmly to stop such abuses."

In the video, a man identified as Abu Sakkar, an alleged commander of the Omar al-Farouq al-Mustakila brigade, is shown standing over the body of a uniformed soldier.

"We swear to God we will eat your hearts and livers, you soldiers of Bashar the dog," he says as he cuts out the heart in the amateur footage uploaded to YouTube.

The man then stands up, raises his dagger in one hand and the heart in the other and raises it to his mouth before the video abruptly ends.



Protestors carry placards as they march to parliament in Nairobi yesterday as they protest a scheme by Kenya's new MPs to increase their salaries. Symbolising MPs' greed the protestors carried live pigs to the gates but were later dispersed by police using teargas and water cannon.

PHOTO: AFP

# Diplomacy gathers pace

Putin meets Netanyahu amid growing international pressure

AFP, Moscow

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday discussed the conflict in Syria as concern grew about Moscow's arms deliveries to the Damascus regime and a spiralling death toll.

After the talks, Putin warned against any moves that would further destabilise the situation in Syria.

"In this crucial period it is especially important to avoid any moves that can shake the situation," Putin was quoted as saying by news agencies, days after Israeli forces launched air strikes against regime targets in Syria.

Netanyahu had been expected to warn Putin against delivering advanced S-300 missiles to Syria which would severely complicate any future air attacks against the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Russia has refused to halt arms supplies to the Damascus regime,

## SYRIA CIVIL WAR



saying it has to honour contracts it concluded before the war.

Netanyahu is just the latest world leader to beat a path to Putin's door for talks on Syria in recent days, after US Secretary of State John Kerry and British Prime Minister David Cameron met the Russian strongman last week.

In the wake of the talks with Netanyahu at Putin's vacation residence in the southern resort of Sochi, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon is also due to travel to Russia later this week.

The flurry of diplomatic activity

indicates some hope on the part of the West that Russia could be persuaded to soften its line over a conflict that according to activists has now killed at least 80,000 people.

Cameron said on Monday after talks with US President Barack Obama that London and Moscow had found "common ground" on the crisis.

Obama was more cautious however, saying that there "remains lingering suspicions between Russia and other members of the G8 and or the West".

The US leader added that Russia as a G8 member had an "interest as well as an obligation" to help end the violence.

Particular hope has focussed on the agreement between Russia and the United States to work to convene a peace conference on Syria.

The conference is likely to be held in early June and not this month as the US works to bring the different sides together, State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said Monday.

# US secretly obtained staff phone records: AP

REUTERS, Washington

The Associated Press said on Monday the US government secretly seized telephone records of AP offices and reporters for a two-month period in 2012, describing the acts as a "massive and unprecedented intrusion" into news-gathering operations.

AP Chief Executive Gary Pruitt, in a letter posted on the agency's website, said the AP was informed last Friday that the Justice Department gathered records for more than 20 phone lines assigned to the news agency and its reporters.

"There can be no possible justification for such an overbroad collection of the telephone communications of The Associated Press and its reporters," Pruitt said in the letter addressed to Attorney General Eric Holder.

An AP story on the records seizure said the government would not say why it sought them.

But it noted that US officials have previously said the US Attorney's Office in the District of Columbia was conducting a criminal investigation into information contained in a May 7, 2012, AP story about a CIA operation in Yemen that stopped an al-Qaeda plot to detonate a bomb on an airplane headed for the United States.

Five reporters and an editor involved in that story were among those whose phone numbers were obtained by the government, the AP said.

The reporters who were targeted included Matt Apuzzo, Adam Goldman and Eileen Sullivan, who were also part of a team that won the Pulitzer Prize for revealing secret New York Police Department intelligence operations targeting Muslim communities.

## ODDLY enough

Man finds secret Coca-Cola recipe!

YAHOO NEWS ONLINE

Atlanta's Cliff Kluge claims to have stumbled upon a 70-year-old copy of the official recipe for Coca-Cola, and he's selling it on eBay for \$5 million.

Kluge says that he and his wife discovered the recipe inside a box of letters and papers they recently purchased from an estate sale. The recipe is dated 1943.

Coca-Cola says its recipe has been kept a secret since the 19th century.

For its part, Coca-Cola maintains that the secret recipe for the world's best-selling soft drink is still safely ensconced at the World of Coca-Cola in downtown Atlanta.

Drunk tourist charges, scares off elephant

AFP, Johannesburg

Video footage of an inebriated tourist lunging out of his car and charging a wild elephant at South Africa's famous Kruger National Park caused an uproar on Monday.

With friends cheering and encouraging him, the man runs towards the elephant, falls to the ground but gets up again and bolts in the direction of the animal.

The elephant initially swings its trunk towards the man, but soon makes its escape. The man returns to his cheering friends. The video can be viewed at [www.latestsightings.com](http://www.latestsightings.com)

# All-party agreement barred Pakistan women from polls

DAWN ONLINE

A written agreement, banning women from polling during May 11 polls in PK-95 Lower Dir seat, surfaced Monday showing signatures of leaders of major political parties along with witnesses.

The agreement has been written on a white paper with signatures of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) candidate for PK-95 Malik Rehmatullah Khan and Rah-i-Haq Party leader Qari Ubaidullah.

The document also contains signatures of other contestants including Ziaul Haq Haideri, Jamia Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) local leader Haji Abdur Rehman Khan, Jamaat-i-Islami's Azazul Mulk, Dr Nazir of Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf (PTI), Abdul Wahid of Awami National Party (ANP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's Dr Deedar Muhammad.

According to sources, the agreement was signed on May 10 at Ghaznavi Model School Munda and it was agreed upon that no women voter would cast vote on May 11 at Mian Kalley Polling Stations and other polling stations of PK-95 constituency.

Six witnesses had also endorsed the agreement under their signatures and it was also agreed upon that the party which would violate the agreement and allow their women for polling will be fined Rs5 million and the signatories would have to pay the amount to others.

# Obama congratulates Sharif on huge election success

Official vote count shows PML-N set for majority

AGENCIES

US President Barack Obama yesterday telephoned Pakistan's prime minister-elect Nawaz Sharif to congratulate him on his recent victory in the polls, said a press release issued by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz.

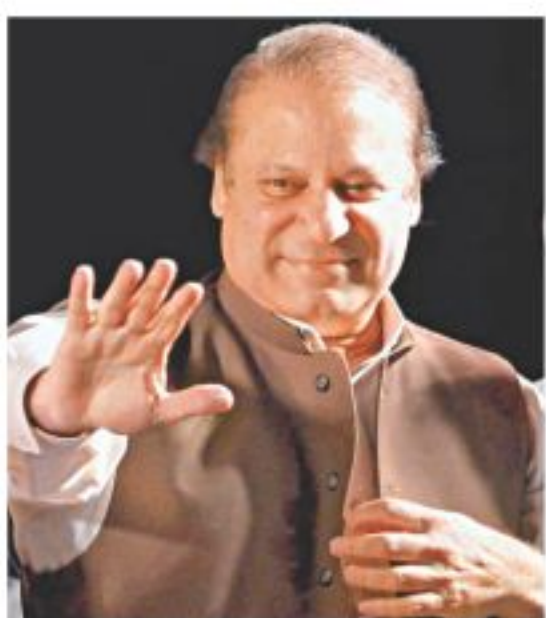
The US president expressed his wish to meet Sharif soon while conveying his best wishes on behalf of the people of the United States.

He praised the PML-N chief's courage for running the election campaign in adverse circumstances.

"America respects the mandate you have been given," said Obama. "I have heard great things about you.....and I wish that we get to meet soon," he added.

The US president further said that America is looking forward to even stronger friendly and economic ties with Pakistan.

Sharif thanked President Obama for the friendly gesture of felicitating him.



Nawaz Sharif

yesterday indicates a big win for former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's party.

Figures released by the country's election commission, based on 254 of the 269 races where the counting has been completed, show Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-N party will likely get a majority in the national assembly, setting him up to be prime minister for the third time.

Sharif's party so far has won 123 of the 254 directly elected national assembly seats, the commission spokesman Khurshed Alam said.

Independent candidates who normally join the party that forms the government won 25 seats. The combination would give Sharif's party more than the 137 directly elected seats they need to have a majority out of 272 seats.

The outgoing ruling Pakistan People's Party won 31 seats. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party led by former cricket star Imran Khan won 26 seats.



## PROTEST OVER VOTE RIGGING

Activists of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) protest against the rigging in election in Islamabad. PTI chairman Imran Khan said on Monday that his party had collected evidence of rigging in 25 constituencies of the National Assembly and asked the Election Commission of Pakistan to look into the complaints. Khan, who is bed-ridden at the Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital since May 7 after falling off a fork-lift vehicle, called for re-counting in constituencies identified for rigging complaints.

PHOTO: AFP

# Rwanda building collapses; 100 feared trapped

AFP, Kigali

Around 100 people are feared trapped after a four-storey building under construction collapsed in northeastern Rwanda, the government said yesterday.

"So far, the tentative information we have indicates that debris fell on about 100 people, we are yet to come up with the exact figures," Rwandan Minister of Disaster Management Seraphine Mukantabana told AFP.

Police spokesman Theos Badege said that three people were confirmed dead and 21 people had been taken to hospital.

Those trapped are believed to include both construction workers on the building as well as passersby on the street.

The building, on a roadside in the town of Nyagatare, some 100 kilometres north-east of the capital Kigali, collapsed on Tuesday afternoon.

"At the moment we are working with the police on a quick response," Mukantabana added.

"The building that collapsed was a four-storey located in Nyagatare district by the roadside, and that is why it affected many people."

# Iranian-American launches bid for Iran's presidency

CNN ONLINE

An Iranian-American college professor hopes to be Iran's next president. But the motivation for Hooshang Amirahmadi's quixotic campaign is to re-establish trust between the United States and Iran.

In a weeklong registration process that ended Saturday, presidential candidates registered at the Ministry of Interior, where the Guardian Council -- the most influential clerical body in Iran that operates under the watchful eyes of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei -- will assess and announce whom it deems to be qualified nominees in the coming week.

"The biggest challenge right now is the lack of trust, a trust that over time, after the 1979 Islamic Revolution, has been diminished to zero," Amirahmadi considers trust key to building the future of Iran while re-establishing relations with the United States.

For more three decades Amirahmadi has lived in both the United States and Iran. An economist and scholar, he joined Rutgers University in 1983, where he's currently a professor of planning and international development. Amirahmadi's career took a more public turn in 1997 when he founded the American Iranian Council, a think tank that provides a base for research, analysis and dialogue between the US and Iran.

This would be Amirahmadi's second attempt to enter Iran's presidential election. In 2005 the Guardian Council rejected his candidacy.

If he is rejected, Amirahmadi said this election won't end his decade-long efforts for change.

"I'm building a political organisation that will work with others for a better Iran -- an Iran that's friendly with US, has a solid economy and democracy, and ultimately an Iran that belongs to the international community."



Amirahmadi

# NEWSIN brief

## 2m sign petition to oust Morsi

AFP, Cairo

A campaign calling for the ouster of Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi and for early presidential elections has gathered over two million signatures, organisers told AFP.

The "Tamarod" (Rebellion in Arabic) campaign seeks to withdraw confidence from the Islamist leader because he has failed the revolution that brought him to power, they said.

Tamarod has called for a mass protest outside the presidential palace on June 30 when Morsi marks one year in power.

## 'CIA agent' detained in Moscow

AFP, Moscow

Russia yesterday said it had detained an alleged American CIA agent who was working undercover at the US embassy and was discovered with a large stash of money as he was trying to recruit a Russian intelligence officer.

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB, ex-KGB) identified the man Ryan C Fogle - third secretary of the political section of Washington's embassy in Moscow -- and said he had been handed back to the embassy after his detention.

The Russian news agency reports said the suspected agent had been caught red-handed trying to recruit an employee of one of the Russian security services.

## Pak ambassador to US resigns

PTI, Washington

Pakistan's ambassador to the US, Sherry Rehman, has resigned from her post.

Congratulating the new parliament on its election, ambassador Rehman has sent in her resignation to the prime minister, saying that it is time a new envoy come in as quickly as possible so that there is no gap in the relationship, an embassy spokesman said.

A political appointee of the previous government and a close aide of Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari, Rehman came to Washington at the time when the US-Pak relationship was at its lowest ebb in post 9/11. Rehman had succeeded in reviving the US-Pak relationship.



Sherry Rehman

## Saudi executions toll hits 40

AFP, Riyadh

A Saudi convicted of murder was beheaded yesterday, the interior ministry announced, raising to 40 the number of people executed in the conservative Muslim kingdom this year.

The beheading brings to 40 the number of people executed in Saudi Arabia since the start of the year, according to an AFP tally. In 2012, the kingdom executed 76 people, according to a count based on official figures.

Rape, murder, apostasy, armed robbery and drug trafficking are all punishable by death under Saudi Arabia's strict version of sharia, or Islamic law.

## Deadly car blast hits Benghazi

AFP, Benghazi

A deadly car bombing in the Libyan city of Benghazi on Monday has unleashed international condemnation and highlighted the insecurity still ravaging the city which was the cradle of the uprising against late dictator Muammar Gaddafi.

Officials gave contradicting death tolls after the devastating bomb destroyed a restaurant and damaged cars and buildings near Al-Jala hospital in the centre of Benghazi.

Deputy Interior Minister Abdullah Massoud said 15 people were killed and 30 wounded in the blast. He stressed it was a "preliminary toll".