



HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN GAZA

Palestinians flee their homes in Gaza's eastern Shejaiya district yesterday, after heavy Israeli shelling that left casualties lying in the streets, an AFP correspondent reported. Top/ (from left to right), An Israeli artillery fires a 155mm shell towards targets in the Gaza Strip; a girl mourns the death of a relative; and medics evacuate an injured man from Shejaiya district, yesterday. At least 87 people were killed and nearly 500 wounded in Israeli shelling of Gaza's northeastern Shejaiya district overnight, medics said.

PHOTO: AFP

Bolivia legalises child labour

INDEPENDNET.CO.UK

Bolivia has become the first country to legalise child labour after a law was signed by Vice-President Alvaro Garcia Linera. The new legislation was first approved by Congress earlier this month, and now the signature from Linera means the age that children can legally work is to be lowered from 14 to 10. Under the new legislation, children above the age of 10 will be allowed to become self-employed workers as long as they have enrolled in school and have the permission of their parents. Children over the age of 12 will be permitted to take on contract work, again with parental consent and compulsory school attendance. The law to lower the age in which children can legally work, is all part of the Bolivian government's plan to help Bolivians living in poverty. It is hoped that adding another wage to a family's income could alleviate the financial burdens that a large proportion of Bolivians face. Senator Adolfo Mendoza, one of the bill's sponsors told the Associated Press: "Child labour already exists in Bolivia and it's difficult to fight it. Rather than persecute it, we want to protect the rights and guarantee the labour security of children." It is estimated that a total of 1 million of Bolivia's children between the ages of five and 17 currently work, making up 15 per cent of the country's workforce.

Congress, NC end alliance in Kashmir

TNN, New Delhi

The Congress has decided to go alone in the upcoming assembly elections in Jammu & Kashmir by putting up candidates on all 87 seats. Senior Congress leader Ambika Soni said that the party will contest all 87 assembly seats in the state alone. Congress-National Conference coalition government came to power under chief minister Omar Abdullah in January 2009. According to sources, workers of both parties are against going together in the polls. However, Omar Abdullah pointed out that it was his party's decision to end the alliance with Congress.

Israel using flechette shells

Rights group says the shells spray out thousand of tiny, potentially lethal darts

GUARDIAN ONLINE

The Israeli military is using flechette shells, which spray out thousands of tiny and potentially lethal metal darts, in its military operation in Gaza. Six flechette shells were fired towards the village of Khuzaa, east of Khan Younis, on 17 July, according to the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights. Nahla Khalil Najjar, 37, suffered injuries to her chest, it said. PCHR provided a picture of flechettes taken by a fieldworker last week. The Israel Defence Forces (IDF) did not deny using the shells in the conflict. "As a rule, the IDF only employs weapons that have been determined lawful under international law, and in a manner which fully conforms with the laws of armed conflict," a spokesperson said in response to a request for specific comment on the deployment of flechettes. B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights organisation, describes a flechette



shell as "an anti-personnel weapon that is generally fired from a tank. The shell explodes in the air and releases thousands of metal darts 37.5mm in length, which disperse in a conical arch 300 metres long and about 90 metres wide". The munitions are not prohibited under international humanitarian law. The legality of flechette munitions was upheld by the Israeli supreme court in 2002, and according to an Israeli military source, they are particularly effective against enemy fighters operating in areas covered by vegetation.

The source said a number of armies around the world deploy flechette shells, and that they were intended solely for use against legitimate military targets in accordance with international law. The IDF has deployed flechette shells in Gaza and Lebanon before. B'Tselem has documented the deaths of nine Palestinians in Gaza from flechettes in 2001 and 2002. Flechettes have also killed and wounded dozens of civilians, including women and children, in conflicts between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon. The Israeli military deployed artillery shells containing white phosphorous in densely populated areas of Gaza during Operation Cast Lead in 2008 and 2009, causing scores of deaths and extensive burns. It initially issued a categorical denial of reports of the use of white phosphorous, but later admitted it, saying the weapon was only used to create smokescreens.

MH17 CRASH

Black boxes Recovered

Rebels say they will hand over them to int'l experts

AFP, Donetsk

Pro-Russian rebels in eastern Ukraine yesterday said they had recovered objects which appear to be the black boxes of downed Malaysian airliner MH17 and are willing to hand them over to international investigators. "Jet parts resembling the black boxes were discovered at the crash site," said Alexander Borodai, prime minister of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, adding that they would be handed over to "international experts if they arrive". Borodai also said bodies which have been removed from the crash site will be kept in refrigerated carriages on a train near the scene "until the experts arrive". The rebel said his teams had taken the corpses away from the crash site "out of respect for the families" and because "it is becoming inhumane in these conditions". "We couldn't wait any longer because of the heat and also because there are many dogs and wild animals in the zone, he added.



Journalists work next to railway wagons which according to employees and local residents contains bodies of passengers of the Malaysia Airlines plane which crashed in eastern Ukraine three days ago, at a railway station in the town of Torez, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Missile came from Russia: Kerry EU warns Russia of more sanctions over inaction

AFP, Washington

The missile system used to shoot down a Malaysian airliner was handed to pro-Russian separatists in Ukraine by Moscow, the top US diplomat said yesterday. "It's pretty clear that this is a system that was transferred from Russia in the hands of separatists," US Secretary of State John Kerry told CNN, saying that a sophisticated SA-11 system had been used in Thursday's crash. "We know with confidence, with confidence that the Ukrainians did not have such a system anywhere near the vicinity at that point in time. So it obviously points a very clear finger at the separatists. Meanwhile, France, Britain and Germany yesterday warned Russia it could face further EU sanctions if it did not press pro-Kremlin

separatists in Ukraine to allow unfettered access to the crash site of flight MH17. Francois Hollande, Angela Merkel and David Cameron held phone separate talks to discuss the situation in eastern Ukraine days after a Malaysia Airlines jet crashed, killing 298 people on board after what is believed to have been a strike by a surface-to-air missile. Concerns have been mounting that the separatists are blocking access to key evidence and to the bodies of the passengers, scores of which were moved from the crash site to a train yesterday. Cameron had already raised the prospect of fresh EU sanctions against Russia, warning in the Sunday Times that Moscow should be held accountable if it was confirmed that MH17 was downed by a missile fired from an area held by pro-Russian separatists in Ukraine.

Widow wins \$23b tobacco damages

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

A jury in Florida has awarded the widow of a chain smoker who died of lung cancer 18 years ago record punitive damages of more than \$23bn against America's second-biggest cigarette maker, RJ Reynolds. The judgment, returned on Friday night, was the largest in Florida history in a wrongful death lawsuit filed by a single plaintiff, said Ryan Julison, a spokesman for the woman's lawyer, Chris Chestnut. Cynthia Robinson, of Pensacola, sued the cigarette maker in 2008 over the death of her husband, Michael Johnson, claiming the company conspired to conceal the health dangers and addictive nature of its products. Johnson, a hotel shuttle-bus driver who died of lung cancer in 1996 aged 36, smoked between one and three packets a day for more than 20 years, starting at age 13, Chestnut said. After a four-week trial and 11 hours of deliberations, the jury returned a verdict granting compensatory damages of \$7.3m to the widow. The same jury deliberated for another seven hours before awarding Robinson the additional sum of \$23.6bn.

Israel hints at ending ground assault soon

AFP, Washington

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday said that an operation to destroy a network of tunnels used by militants in Gaza could be over "fairly quickly" but would not be pinned down on specifics. In an interview with CNN's "State of the Union" weekly talk show, Netanyahu also called for an international effort to demilitarize the enclave. His comments came as Israel said its ground operation to destroy the network of tunnels used by the militants to stage cross-border attacks was to "expand" later yesterday.

Arabs condemn Israeli 'war crimes'

AFP, Cairo

The Arab League yesterday lashed out at Israel for pounding Gaza's Shejaiya district, accusing the Jewish state of "war crimes," and called for an "immediate stop" to its offensive. More than 87 Palestinians were killed yesterday as Israeli forces bombarded Shejaiya, sending thousands fleeing in the deadliest assault in 5 years.

Kerry planning ME trip 'very shortly'

AFP, Washington

US Secretary of State John Kerry yesterday said that he is planning to head "very shortly" to the Middle East, amid mounting efforts to negotiate a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip. "I am planning to go and probably very shortly," the top US diplomat told CBS television's "Face the Nation," adding he was due to speak with President Barack Obama yesterday and "it may be that he'll ask me to leave immediately."

NEWSIN brief

Pak civilian dies in Indian border fire

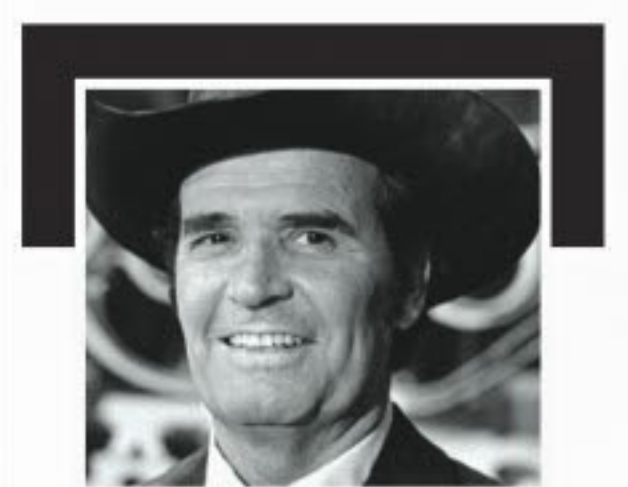
AFP, Islamabad

Pakistani officials yesterday accused Indian troops of killing a civilian and wounding four others in "unprovoked firing" across the border in its eastern province of Punjab. India and Pakistan often accuse each other of violating a 2003 ceasefire agreement. The two countries have fought three wars, two of them over the divided and disputed Kashmir region.

Airstrikes kills 28 in NW Pakistan

AFP, Bannu

Pakistan's military yesterday bombed six militant bolt-holes in the troubled North Waziristan region, killing at least 28 insurgents, officials said. Pakistani jets and artillery began hitting rebel targets in North Waziristan in mid-June to try to regain full control of the district and ground forces moved in on June 30.



US acting legend James Garner dies

REUTERS, Los Angeles

Legendary American Actor James Garner, best known for his prime-time television roles, has died at age 86. Garner, who built a six-decade career playing ruggedly charming, good-natured anti-heroes and received the highest honour of the Screen Actors Guild in 2004, was found dead from natural causes on Saturday night at his Los Angeles home, according to police. With his wry, low-key presence, good looks and thick dark hair, Garner was hailed by some as Hollywood's next Clark Gable or Cary Grant. But he ended up scoring his next big hit on the small screen in the 1970s, starring as canny private detective Jim Rockford on "The Rockford Files."

Develop anti-spying technologies Snowden says while addressing hacking forum

REUTERS, New York

Edward Snowden, a former US spy agency contractor who leaked details of major US surveillance programs, called on supporters at a hacking conference to spur development of easy-to-use technologies to subvert government surveillance programs around the globe. Snowden, who addressed conference attendees on Saturday via video link from Moscow, said he intends to devote much of his time to promoting such technologies, including ones that allow people to communicate anonymously and encrypt their messages. "You in this room, right now have both the means and the capability to improve the



future by encoding our rights into programs and protocols by which we rely every day," he told the New York City conference, known as Hackers On Planet Earth, or HOPE. "That is what a lot of my future work is going to be involved in," he told hundreds of hackers who crowded into an auditorium and overflow rooms to hear him speak from Moscow, where he fled to last year. At the HOPE hacking conference, several talks detailed approaches for thwarting government surveillance, including a system known as SecureDrop that is designed to allow people to anonymously leak documents to journalists.