

# Jihadism killed 5,000 in November

BBC ONLINE

Jihadist attacks killed more than 5,000 people in just one month, an investigation by the BBC and King's College London has found. Civilians bore the brunt of the violence, with more than 2,000 killed in reported jihadist incidents during November 2014. Islamic State carried out the most attacks, adding to the spiralling death toll in Iraq and Syria.

The data gathered by the BBC found that 5,042 people were killed in 664 jihadist attacks across 14 countries - a daily average of 168 deaths, or seven every hour.

About 80% of the deaths came in just four countries - Iraq, Nigeria, Syria and Afghanistan, according to the study of media and civil society reports.

Iraq was the most dangerous place to be, with 1,770 deaths in 233 attacks, ranging from shootings to suicide bombings.

In Nigeria, 786 people, almost all of them civilians, were killed in 27 Boko Haram incidents.

Afghanistan suffered almost the same number of deaths as Nigeria (782) but they tended to be in smaller, targeted attacks.

In war-ravaged Syria, 693 people were killed; Yemen had 410 deaths in 37 attacks.



Hong Kong police dismantle the remains of the pro-democracy protest camp in the Admiralty district of Hong Kong yesterday. **Bottom-right, Police dismantle a large yellow umbrella -- the symbol of the pro-democracy protests and a student is being forcefully evicted by cops.** PHOTO: AFP

# We'll be back

## Hong Kong protesters chant as camp site is dismantled

REUTERS, Hong Kong

Hong Kong police arrested pro-democracy activists and cleared most of the main protest site yesterday, marking an end to more than two months of street demonstrations in the Chinese-controlled city, but many chanted: "We will be back".

Most of the activists chose to leave the Admiralty site, next to the Central business area, peacefully, despite their demands for a free vote not being met. But the overall mood remained defiant.

Groups of up to four police arrested holdout protesters one by one, hours after workers used wire cutters to remove barricades and dismantle bamboo scaffolding.

Martin Lee, one of the founders of the main opposition Democratic Party, student leader Nathan Law, media mogul Jimmy Lai and legislators were among those arrested.

Lai said 75 days of protests would never have been enough to see the demands met.

Hong Kong Federation of Students leader Alex Chow said: "You might have the clearance today but people will come back on to the streets another day."

The mainly peaceful protests have represented one of the most serious challenges to China's authority since the 1989 pro-democracy demonstrations and bloody crackdown in and around Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

Going forward, protest leaders have said they will consider other forms of civil disobedience, given Beijing's continued refusal to grant any concessions.

"Blocking government may be even more powerful than blocking roads," Benny Tai, one of the leaders of the movement, has said. "Refusal to pay taxes, delaying rent payments ... and filibustering in the Legislative Council, along with other acts of non-cooperation, could make governing more inconvenient."

At the protest site, authorities used around 20 large trucks with cranes to remove mountains of rubbish. A government spokesman said roads would be reopened to traffic as soon as possible.

Hundreds of police swept through other parts of Admiralty, checking tents before dragging them away along with metal barriers, plastic sheets and umbrellas, which activists had used during clashes to guard against pepper spray and baton blows.

# Fidel Castro wins China peace prize

AFP, Beijing

Fidel Castro has been awarded China's version of the Nobel Peace Prize, reports said yesterday, with a paper close to the ruling Communist Party hailing the former Cuban leader's "important contributions" to world peace.

Castro bested more than 20 nominees including South Korean President Park Geun-Hye, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, a regional group led by Moscow and Beijing, to win this year's "Confucius Peace Prize", the state-run Global Times reported.

The Cuban revolutionary icon was selected by nine judges out of a group of 16 experts and scholars, the paper said.

A Cuban exchange student received this year's award on Castro's behalf at a ceremony on Tuesday, one day before Malala Yousafzai and Kailash Satyarthi accepted their Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo.

# CIA chief defends action

AGENCIES

CIA Director John Brennan defended harsh interrogation techniques, saying they provided information -- some of which was "useful" in the raid that led to the death of Osama bin Laden, but he said it was "unknowable" what information could specifically be attributed to those techniques.

"It is our considered view that the detainees who were subjected to enhanced interrogation techniques provided information that was useful and was used in the ultimate operation



**CIA chief admits some 'abhorrent' terror interrogation**

**Says CIA did not misled public, US government**

**Says CIA has reformed, so mistakes won't happen again**

to go against Bin Laden," Brennan said.

Brennan's comments, in a rare news conference, come two days after a Senate panel released a blockbuster 528-page report detailing "enhanced interrogation techniques" -- including

mock executions, "rectal rehydration," sleep deprivation and beatings -- in interrogations in the mid-2000s.

He admitted that some CIA officers' actions were "not authorized, were abhorrent and rightly should be repudiated by all. And we fell short in holding some officers accountable for their mistakes."

Brennan acknowledged that the agency sometimes exceeded its legal authority during interrogations of terrorism suspects.

He said detainees who faced "enhanced interrogation techniques" did provide some information that provided useful -- as well as other information that didn't.

But he staunchly defended the agency during the 45-minute news conference, adding: "CIA officers' actions that did comport with the law and policy should neither be criticized nor conflated with the actions of the few who did not follow the guidance issued."

Brennan opened his remarks with a vivid depiction of the events of the Sept 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, and described the atmosphere going into fighting terrorism and collecting intelligence in the immediate aftermath of the attacks.

"There were no easy answers, and whatever your views are on [enhanced interrogation techniques], our nation and in particular this agency did a lot of things right during this difficult time to keep this country strong and secured," Brennan said at a rare press conference at the CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia.

Brennan praised those who worked

with him but he added the agency was "unprepared to conduct a detention and interrogation program, and our officers inadequately developed and monitored its initial activities."

His strongest criticism of the report was with its contention that the CIA misled the public and government officials -- including then-President George W. Bush. That, Brennan said, is untrue -- a stance former Vice President Dick Cheney backed up in an interview with Fox News on Wednesday night.

Brennan was the CIA's deputy exec-



utive director while the tactics were being used. He said he had "some visibility" into what was happening, but that he wasn't in the chain of command for that program, and didn't say whether he had made any effort to push for changes at the time.

He also noted that the program for using "enhanced interrogation techniques" was ended in 2007.

Meanwhile, Cheney yesterday said president George W Bush was "fully informed" about CIA interrogation techniques. Dick Cheney said Bush "knew everything he needed to know" about the programme, and the report was "full of crap".

# Time presses as climate talks head for penultimate day

AFP, Lima

Environment ministers from around the world faced mounting time pressure on Thursday to shape a blueprint for a global pact on climate change with groundbreaking carbon curbs at its core.

Concern grew over an unwieldy draft text, intended to guide negotiations which by December 2015 must forge the most ambitious environmental accord in history.

There was also a revival of a years-old dispute over which countries should do

more to tackle carbon emissions driving dangerous climate change.

The talks -- the annual forum of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) -- are scheduled to end late today after a 12-day huddle in Lima.

Their goal is to clear the way to a deal in Paris to slow the juggernaut of climate change by limiting global warming to two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) over pre-industrial levels.

At its heart would be a roster of voluntary national pledges on greenhouse-gas emissions spewed by burning coal, oil and gas.

But countries remained far apart on its design. This casts a shadow over prospects for next year, when pledges are put on the table ahead of the Paris showdown.

India led a chorus of developing countries on Wednesday to defend a division of responsibilities enshrined in the UNFCCC at its birth 22 years ago.

"The new agreement has to be in full accordance with all, I repeat all, the principles and provisions of the Framework

Convention," warned Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar.

The "differentiation" row is rooted in what happened in 1992.

UN members were split into advanced economies, the first to burn fossil fuels to power their prosperity, and developing countries, which -- until then -- bore little blame for carbon pollution.

Europe, the United States and other advanced economies accept that differentiated responsibilities remain valid today.

But they argue it is senseless to shape a post-2020 deal on the basis of the world as it was in 1992. Voracious burners of coal, developing countries now account for nearly 60 percent of global emissions, a share set to rise, they argue.

Negotiations on framing the post-2020 pact were scheduled to wrap up by late yesterday so that the draft can be adopted today.

But the UNFCCC's meetings are notorious for textual battles and delay, in some cases prolonging closure by more than a day.

On Wednesday, thousands of activists and campaigners for indigenous rights marched in central Lima in a bid to hike pressure on negotiators.

With the 2015 deadline looming, climate change has returned to the top political table following a near-fiasco at the 2009 conference in Copenhagen.

For a good chance of reaching the 2 C target, annual emissions must fall by 40 to 70 percent by 2050, and to zero or below by 2100, say scientists.



# Tension soars in Palestine over key official's death

France's upper house, Irish parliament back recognition of Palestinian state

AFP, Ramallah

Thousands of Palestinians gathered yesterday to mourn a senior official who died in a confrontation with Israeli troops, as the army sent reinforcements to the West Bank and braced for unrest.

The Palestinian leadership blamed Israel for the "killing" of 55-year-old Ziad Abu Ein, as tensions threatened to boil over into another round of violence in the occupied territories.

Officials and onlookers streamed into the Ramallah headquarters of president Mahmud Abbas for the funeral procession to a nearby cemetery, an AFP correspondent said.

Uniformed Palestinians carried Abu Ein's coffin, draped in a Palestinian flag, into the courtyard, as nationalist songs blared and mourners chanted "Revenge!" and "Your blood will not be spilled in vain!"

Schools were closed in a day of mourning and posters of Abu Ein were plastered on walls throughout the West Bank city.

There were no immediate reports of violence.

Abu Ein died Wednesday after a confrontation with Israeli soldiers during a protest march against settlements by roughly 300 Palestinians who intended to plant olive trees as a symbolic act, an AFP photographer said.

The incident prompted Abbas to threaten measures in response, saying "all options are open for discussion and implementation", but without specifying what those were.

Israel urged calm, with Defence Minister Moshe Yaalon expressing regret for the death and saying a military inquiry had been launched.

Meanwhile, France's upper house of parliament yesterday urged the government to recognise Palestine as a state, following a similar and highly symbolic vote in the lower house.

The Senate resolution, calling for French recognition of Palestine and an "immediate restarting" of peace talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis, passed narrowly, with 153 votes in favour and 146 against.

The vote came after Irish lawmakers urged their government on Wednesday to recognise Palestine as a state in a symbolic motion that sailed through parliament unopposed.

Sweden has gone even further, officially recognising Palestine as a state in a move that prompted Israel to recall its ambassador.

Lawmakers in Britain and Spain have already passed similar motions and Sweden has gone even further, officially recognising Palestine as a state, in a move that prompted Israel to recall its ambassador.



Palestinian security members drive with the coffin of senior Palestinian official Ziad Abu Ein during his funeral in the West Bank city of Ramallah yesterday. PHOTO: AFP