

NEWS IN
brief

Syria regime strikes

kill 82

AFP, Beirut

Dozens of Syrian regime strikes on an opposition-held area near Damascus have killed at least 82 people, a monitor said yesterday, in the deadliest such onslaught since November. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a UK-based monitor, said the new toll in the Thursday air strikes on the Eastern Ghouta region included at least 18 children.

UK intel sharing

with US 'unlawful'

BBC ONLINE

UK surveillance agency GCHQ has been officially censured for not revealing enough about how it shares information with its American counterparts. The Investigatory Powers Tribunal said GCHQ failed until December 2014 to make clear enough details of how it shared data from mass internet surveillance. It was the IPT's first ruling against an intelligence agency in its 15-year history.

East Timor PM

offers resignation

AFP, Dili

East Timor resistance hero Xanana Gusmao has submitted his resignation as prime minister, the government said yesterday. The president must now decide whether to accept the resignation of the 68-year-old, who has served as either president or prime minister since East Timor became independent in 2002 following a long struggle against Indonesian occupation.

Boko Haram attack

Niger for the first time

AFP, Niamey

Islamist group Boko Haram for the first time launched an attack in Niger yesterday, striking at the town of Bosso just across the border from Nigeria, witnesses said. The offensive was repelled by the forces, sources added. Niger's parliament is due to vote on Monday on a proposal to send troops to Nigeria to fight Boko Haram, as impetus to beat the jihadists mounts across the region.

Egypt military kills 27 militants in the Sinai

REUTERS, Cairo

Egyptian military air strikes killed 27 Islamic militants in Northern Sinai early yesterday. Apache helicopters targeted militants from Sinai Province, a group that pledged allegiance to Islamic State, the ultra-hardline militants who have seized swathes of Iraq and Syria, the sources said.

China mall fire kills 17

AFP, Beijing

A nine-year-old boy has been detained after a shopping mall inferno that killed 17 people in China, police said yesterday. The fire broke out Thursday on the top floor of a four-storey building in the city of Huizhou. Huizhou police said that "the fire was caused by a boy playing with fire at the mall," adding that the suspect had been fiddling with a "lighter".

QUOTE
of the day

"Wouldn't this provide Russia with an excuse to openly enter the conflict?"

Germany's Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen says on US move to send weapons to Ukraine to help fight pro-Moscow rebels.

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praised its "magnificent diversity".

While praising its "magnificent diversity", Obama then described India as a place where "religious faiths of all types have, on occasion, been targeted

by other peoples of faith, simply due to their heritage and their beliefs".

Such "acts of intolerance ... would have shocked Gandhiji", Obama added in comments that made front-page headlines in Indian newspapers yesterday.

He, however, did not name any particular religion and said the violence is not unique to one group or one religion.

The White House yesterday strongly refuted allegations that Obama's remarks on religious tolerance was aimed at the ruling BJP, saying the speech in its entirety was about the "core democratic values and principles" of both the US and India.

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