



# Thai car blast kills 1, wounds dozens

AFP, Pattani

A car bomb exploded in a nightlife district in Thailand's deep south, killing one and wounding more than 30, in a nation already on edge after a bombing spree that targeted tourist towns.

The latest blast struck late Tuesday outside a hotel in Pattani, one of three Muslim-majority southern provinces battered by a long-running and shadowy rebellion against the Buddhist-majority state.

"So far there is one killed and more than 30 injured," Major General Thanongsak Wangsupa, Pattani provincial police commander, told AFP yesterday. "The hotel building was considerably damaged."

Pictures showed fires burning on the road outside the hotel's shattered facade, with police picking through the rubble. Nearby a car was destroyed, with karaoke bars, massage parlours and restaurants also damaged.

Pattani is not popular with tourists, but analysts said the militants were sending a message after coordinated bomb and arson attacks struck multiple resort towns on August 11-12, leaving four dead and 37 injured including Europeans.

Those attacks heightened concerns Thailand's southern insurgency may have spread north after years of stalled peace talks -- a theory the country's junta has downplayed given the importance of tourism to the economy.

The southern rebels focus most of their attacks on security officers and symbols of the state, but they do occasionally strike nightlife venues.

Speaking to reporters after the Pattani hotel blast, Thailand's deputy junta leader Prawit Wongsuwan again dismissed any link between the tourist town attacks earlier this month and the southern insurgency.



# Rohingya conflict Suu Kyi picks Annan to lead commission

REUTERS, Yangon

Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi picked former UN chief Kofi Annan yesterday to lead a commission to stop human rights abuses in Rakhine State, where violence between Buddhists and minority Rohingya Muslims has cast a pall over democratic reforms.

More than 100 people were killed in violence in the northwestern state in 2012, and some 125,000 Rohingya Muslims, who are stateless, took refuge in camps where their movements are severely restricted.

Thousands have fled persecution and poverty in an exodus by boat to neighbouring South and Southeast Asian countries.

"The Myanmar government wants to find a sustainable solution on the complicated issues in Rakhine State, that's why it has formed an advisory commission," the government said in a statement.

The Rakhine commission would include nine independent members, including six Myanmar citizens and three foreigners, the government said.

The commission would meet for the first time on Sept 5 in Yangon.

The commission, which includes members of the Muslim and ethnic Rakhine, mostly Buddhist, communities, would focus on conflict prevention, aid, reconciliation, human rights and development, the government said. It will publish a report within a year of its formation.

## NEWS IN brief

### One more Kashmiri protester killed

AFP, Srinagar

One protester was killed yesterday in fresh clashes with security forces in Indian-administered Kashmir, police said. The killing came as Indian Home Minister Rajnath Singh arrived in the disputed region to discuss the unrest with local leaders. Since July 8, some 66 civilians have been killed and thousands more injured in the worst violence to hit the Himalayan region since 2010.

### Mosque suicide blast foiled in Saudi Arabia

AFP, Riyadh

Saudi police shot dead a would-be suicide bomber targeting a mosque in the Shia-dominated district of Qatif, the interior ministry said yesterday. The attempted attack on Mustafa Mosque in Qatif happened around sunset prayers on Tuesday, the ministry said in a statement.

### Nepal PM to visit India to mend ties

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's new prime minister will visit India next month on his first foreign visit, seeking to repair the strained relationship between the neighbours, an official said yesterday. Nepal's relationship with India -- which is often accused of acting as a "big brother" to its smaller impoverished neighbour -- soured after a months-long border blockade last year by ethnic minority protesters.

# Backpacker stabbed to death in Australia

Police say attacker shouted 'Allahu Akbar'

AFP, Sydney

A young British woman died and a man was critically injured when a French national allegedly stabbed three people while saying "Allahu Akbar" at an Australian backpacker's hostel, police said yesterday.

Police are investigating the murder, which occurred late Tuesday in Home Hill, a rural town south of Townsville in far north Queensland state, but could not say whether the alleged attacker had been radicalised.

The motivations behind the stabbings, which left a 30-year-old British man in a critical condition and a local man with non-life threatening injuries, were still unknown, Deputy Commissioner Steve Gollschewski said.

It is alleged that the suspect used the phrase 'Allahu Akbar' during the attack and when arrested by police, he said.

Police are not ruling out any motivations at this stage, whether they be political or criminal, he added. Gollschewski said investigators would also consider whether mental health or drug misuse were factors in the incident in which a dog was also fatally injured.

When asked if the 29-year-old had links to the so-called Islamic State group, Gollschewski said "no".

# Clinton in eye of Trump storm

AFP, New York

Donald Trump stepped up his attacks on Hillary Clinton Tuesday as her campaign battled to silence suggestions that donors to her family's charity paid for access when she was America's top diplomat.

The Democratic nominee, looking to make history as America's first female commander-in-chief, is polling well ahead of her Republican rival but has hit choppy waters this week as the Trump campaign has fought to rebound from a series of damaging self-inflicted wounds.

"Hillary Clinton is totally unfit to hold public office," Trump told a rally in Austin, Texas interrupted several times by protesters.

"It is impossible to figure out where the Clinton Foundation ends and the State Department begins," he added.

Hours earlier, the Associated Press reported that more than half the people outside government who met

Clinton while she was secretary of state donated money to the Clinton Foundation.

"It is now abundantly clear that the Clintons set up a business to profit from public office, they sold access," he said.

"This is corruption and this is why I

## CLINTON FOUNDATION ROW



have called for a special prosecutor to look into this mess," he said.

The Trump campaign demanded an independent probe after conservative group Judicial Watch, which has targeted Clinton for years, released nearly 15,000 emails sent from her private server.

Among the emails are some purporting to show that donors to the Foundation lobbied one of her top aides, Huma Abedin, for access to Clinton.

Clinton campaign spokesman dismissed the AP analysis as based on "utterly flawed data" that "cherry-picked" from her schedule.

The charity has raised some \$2 billion since it was founded in 2001 after Bill Clinton stepped down as president and disburses funds domestically and overseas, handing out some \$218 million in 2014.

Bill Clinton announced this week that if his wife is elected, the foundation will accept only US contributions, that he will step down from the board and will no longer raise funds for the charity.

With Clinton now leading 47 percent to Trump's 41.5 percent, according to an average of national polls from Real Clear Politics, it is unclear to what extent the new reports can damage her standing.

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## ITALY QUAKE

(From left, clockwise) Rescue workers walk amidst a scene of destruction in the town of Amatrice; a team of rescue workers help gently lift a man from a devastated building; and women reacts after a strong earthquake hit Central Italy in the early hours yesterday, devastating dozens of mountain villages. Story on page 1.

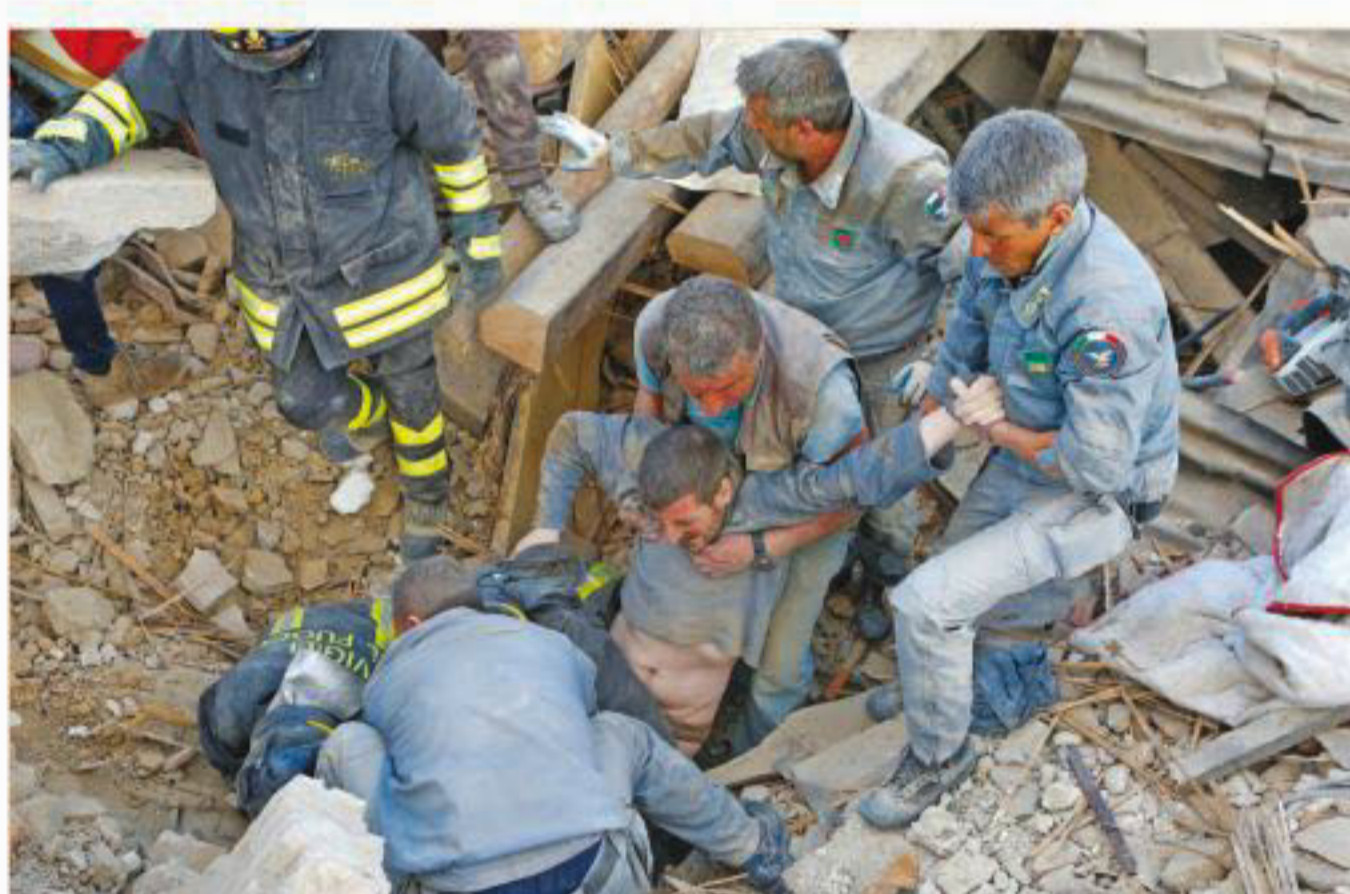


PHOTO: AFP, AP

# NORTH KOREA'S LAUNCH OF SUBMARINE MISSILE Protests as projectile reaches Japan ADIZ

REUTERS, Seoul

North Korea fired a submarine-launched missile yesterday that flew about 500 km towards Japan, a show of improving technological capability for the isolated country that has conducted a series of launches in defiance of UN sanctions.

Having the ability to fire a missile from a submarine could help North Korea evade a new anti-missile system planned for South Korea and pose a threat even if nuclear-armed North Korea's land-based arsenal was destroyed, experts said.

The ballistic missile was fired at around 5:30am from near the coastal city of Sinpo, where a submarine base is located, officials at South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Defense Ministry told Reuters.

The projectile reached Japan's air defence identification zone (ADIZ) for the first time, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a briefing, referring to an area of control designated by countries to help maintain air security.

The missile was fired at a high angle, South Korea's Yonhap News Agency reported, an indication that its full range would be 1,000 km at an ordinary trajectory. The distance indicated the North's push to develop a submarine-launched missile system was paying off, officials and experts said.

The launch came two days after rival South Korea and the United States began annual military exercises in the South that North Korea condemns as a preparation for invasion, and has threatened retaliation.

"This poses a grave threat to Japan's security, and is an unforgivable act that damages regional peace and stability markedly," Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told reporters, adding that Japan had lodged a stern protest.

China opposes North Korea's nuclear and missile programme as well as any words or deeds that cause tension on the Korean peninsula, its foreign minister, Wang Yi, said yesterday at a previously scheduled meeting with his Japanese and South Korean counterparts in Tokyo.

# Hajj stoning ritual to be cut short

AFP, Riyadh

A stoning ritual which led to the deaths of about 2,300 people during last year's hajj will be more tightly controlled during next month's pilgrimage, Saudi newspapers reported yesterday.

The period during which pilgrims can perform the Jamarat ritual will be reduced by 12 hours, the Saudi Gazette and Arab News said.

The symbolic stoning of the devil will be performed as usual over three days beginning September 11 at Mina, about five kilometres east of Mecca's Grand Mosque, Islam's holiest site.

But this year there will be no stoning allowed from 6:00 to 10:30am on the first day, from 2:00 to 6:00 pm on the second day and from 10:30 am to 2:00 pm on the final day, the hajj ministry said.

# 'Economic warfare' French maker DCNS hints at industrial espionage

REUTERS, Sydney/Paris

French naval contractor DCNS yesterday said it may have been the victim of "economic warfare" after secrets about its Scorpene submarines being built in India were leaked.

India opened an investigation after The Australian newspaper published documents relating to the submarine's combat capabilities, raising concerns over another major contract with Australia.

The leak contains more than 22,000 pages outlining the details of six submarines that DCNS has designed for the Indian Navy. The Australian reported that the leak occurred in France in 2011.

"I understand there has been a case of hacking," Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar told reporters. "We will find out what has happened."

The submarines are being built at a state-run shipyard in Mumbai and the first one was expected to go into service by the end of the year, the first step in the Indian navy's effort to rebuild its dwindling fleet.

DCNS, which is also vying for submarine contracts in Norway and Poland, beat Germany's ThyssenKrupp AG and a Japanese-government backed bid by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and Kawasaki Heavy Industries in Australia. That was a major blow to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's push to develop defence export capabilities as part of a more muscular security agenda.

The breadth of detail in the documents creates a strategic problem for India, Malaysia and Chile, all of which operate the same submarine. India has a fleet of 13 ageing submarines, only half of which are operational at any time, opening up a gap with China which is expanding its maritime presence in the Indian Ocean.

## INDIA SUBMARINE DATA LEAK



# Hunter shoots dead migrant in Serbia

AFP, Belgrade

Serbian police have arrested a hunter after an Afghan migrant was shot dead in the country's southeast near the border with Bulgaria, Belgrade said yesterday.

Security forces were patrolling near the town of Pirot late Tuesday when they "heard a shot and then met six migrants, one of whom had been shot in the chest," a defence ministry statement said.

There were also four hunters on the spot, one of whom was arrested after an initial probe.

"Upon the arrival of emergency services, doctors could only establish the death of a 20-year old male citizen of Afghanistan," the statement added, providing no further details.