



An Israeli soldier scuffles with a Palestinian woman who is trying to film the scene of a reported Palestinian stabbing attack on a soldier near the Jewish settler enclave of Tal Rumeda in the city centre of the West Bank town of Hebron, yesterday. Three alleged assailants were killed while carrying out attacks on Israelis, security forces said, shattering weeks of relative calm in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

PHOTO: AFP

Rickshaw puller

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Sohel claimed that he has licence for his pistol, the official added. Police will produce him before a Dhaka court today.

In 2012, Sohel was implicated in another criminal case.

Three Jubo League men, including Zakir Hossain, the then general secretary of Jubo League's DCC North ward-20 unit, were injured as miscreants opened fire on them inside their office in the capital's Mohakhali on July 1, 2012.

Zakir was an aspirant for general secretary post of Banani Thana Jubo League and had been involved in a dispute with Sohel, another aspirant for the post.

A report on the incident was published in The Daily Star on July 2, 2012.

Zakir filed a case against Sohel and some other people in this connection. However, police did not press charges against Sohel, a local Jubo League leader said requesting anonymity.

47 Bangladeshi

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officials said.

Hajj flights of the national flag carrier from Dhaka to Jeddah commenced on August 4 and it ferried 49,545 Bangladeshi hajj pilgrims. This year, 1,01,758 Bangladeshi pilgrims flew to Saudi Arabia to perform hajj, said a Biman official.

The return flights will continue till October 17, the official said.

3 road accidents

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In Tangail, five people were killed and 19 were injured -- four of them seriously -- when a bus went off the road on Dhaka-Bangabandhu Bridge highway in Kalihati early yesterday, our Tangail correspondent reports.

Nazrul Islam, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Kalihati Police Station, said some garment workers from Patgram in Lalmonirhat were returning to work at their Shofipur factory in Gazipur on a bus after the Eid holidays.

The driver of the bus lost control at a sharp bend and the bus ended up off the road in Poule area around 4:30am, leaving four dead on the spot and 20 injured.

Police and Fire Service and Civil Defence personnel rescued the injured and rushed them to Tangail Medical College Hospital where one injured died of his injuries, he said.

The deceased have been identified as Ahsan Habib, 12, Asma Begum, 30, Mominur Rahman, 35, and Ripon Miah, 30, and Mohammad Sumon, 30, of Patgram upazila in Lalmonirhat, he added.

Deputy Commissioner Mahbub Hossain of Tangail visiting the hospital declared to give Tk 20,000 for the families of each deceased and Tk 10,000 for each of the injured.

In Madaripur, three people were killed and 10 others were injured when a bus ramed a locally made three-wheeler on Dhaka-Barisal highway in Baro Bridge area of Rajoir upazila, said Kamrul Hassan, officer-in-charge of Rajoir Police Station.

The deceased were: Belal Sheikh, 51, Belal Matubbor, 36, and Salauddin Kazi, 46.

Critically injured Merin Aktar, 27, was taken to Faridpur Medical College Hospital.

Ten injured passengers of the three-wheeler and the bus were admitted to Rajoir Hospital.

Trump finally

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topics such as immigration, trade and the economy, which he has been using to hit Clinton.

Trump has recovered ground against Clinton in recent national opinion polls after revamping his campaign staff in August and taking steps to give a more polished performance on the campaign trail.

But the birther movement, which casts doubt over whether Obama is legally able to be president, incenses black Americans whose votes Trump has been trying to court.

Clinton rejoined the race at a critical moment, as polls show the lead she has held over Trump narrowing sharply. One survey gave her just a two-point margin, down sharply in a matter of weeks.

She seized on Trump's refusal during a speech Thursday night before the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute.

"He was asked one more time where was President Obama born and he still wouldn't say Hawaii. He still wouldn't say America," Clinton said. "This man wants to be our next president? When will he stop this ugliness, this bigotry?"

The former secretary of state, 68, signalled she was raring to go.

"It's great to be back on the campaign trail," Clinton told cheering supporters in Greensboro, North Carolina -- a key battleground state.

"With two months to go until election day, sitting at home is the last place I wanted to be," she added. "The heat is on."

She announced stops for next week in key swing states where Trump has started closing the gap, including Florida -- a must-win for both candidates.

On Thursday, Clinton also received support from London's first Muslim mayor, Sadiq Khan.

During a stop in Chicago on his first visit to the United States, Khan said he was "a big fan" of Clinton and hoped she would win the presidential election in November.

"She's arguably the most experienced candidate to run to be the president," Khan told reporters following a speech to more than 250 academics, diplomats and business people.

Trump on Thursday declined to say whether he believed Obama was born in Hawaii during an interview with The Washington Post.

"I'll answer that question at the right time. I just don't want to answer it yet," Trump told the newspaper.

His campaign released a statement later in the day saying the candidate is convinced of the legitimacy of Obama's presidency. A US president must be a natural-born citizen.

Obama declined to comment on Trump's revival of the birther issue, telling reporters he had better things to do.

"I'm shocked that a question like that would come up at a time when we've got so many other things to do well, I'm not that shocked actually," Obama said.

A few years into his presidency, Obama, the first African American to win the White House, released a longer version of his birth certificate to answer those who suggested he was not US born.

Man beaten

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Kefayet Ullah, officer-in-charge (OC) of Raozan Police Station, said on Thursday evening Hanif went to a house in Ward 9 under Raozan municipality to collect his payment for construction work of the house.

The house owner and his accomplices, however, refused to pay and roughed up the contractor, the OC said quoting Hanif's family members.

Battered and bruised, Hanif came home that night and received first aid at a local pharmacy. Later, as his condition deteriorated, his family members had to rush out with him to the CMCH, said the OC, adding that Hanif had died before reaching the hospital.

The body bore marks of injury from blunt objects and it has been sent to Chittagong Medical College for an autopsy, OC Kefayet said.

The family members of the deceased did not file any case yet, he added.

Suicide bomb

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Jamaat-ur-Ahrar also claimed the Easter Sunday bombing in a park in the eastern city of Lahore that killed 72 people, many of them children.

Most of the myriad militant groups that stage attacks inside Pakistan seek to overthrow the government to establish an Islamic theocracy and impose a stricter interpretation of the religion than is practised in much of the country.

Other armed groups based in the country target neighbouring Afghanistan and Indian-controlled Kashmir.

franchise in the region.

Nusra says it broke with Al-Qaeda in July and has rebranded itself Jabhat Fateh al-Sham.

"Although assumed killed in August 2015, Diaby re-emerged in May 2016, claiming his death was a ploy to allow him to travel to Turkey for an operation," the designation said.

"Diaby came to the attention of French intelligence due to his involvement with a French extremist group and his online propaganda video series," it added.

Montreal

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dropped by one third with nine million people receiving anti-viral treatments, Faison said.

"That is huge progress," he said, adding that there is still much to do.

Early pledges have already brought the Fund to within 85-90 percent of that objective, Faison told AFP.

The United States, which has provided nearly one-third of the total funding so far, has pledged another US\$4.3 billion, he said.

The second biggest donor, France, announced in June it would provide US\$1.2 billion, maintaining its current level of commitment.

It was followed by Germany, which is pledging \$900 million, Japan at \$800 million and Canada, which has boosted its pledge by 20 percent to \$600 million. The Fund's managers are still waiting to hear from Britain.

France, represented by Secretary of State for Development Andre Vallini, has faced criticisms before the opening of the conference.

Five NGOs, including Sidaction, Global Health Action, Oxfam France, denounced in an open letter a proposal to cut by 20 percent to Unitaid, a global health initiative to reduce the costs of drugs and treatments for HIV, tuberculosis and malaria. Officials have not confirmed they are considering the measure.

"Such disengagement from France would be incomprehensible and would have worrying consequences for global health," said the signatories.

Woman held

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Faruk, a supervisor of cargoes at the Dhaka airport, in Gazipur's Joydebpur on Thursday after a case was filed with Haimchar Police Station under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act.

Mostafa Sardar, who had taken the child to the couple, was also arrested.

The family of the girl was already in trouble after her father abandoned them, according to Haimchar police in Chandpur.

Taking the advantage of the situation, Mostafa Sardar took the girl to Gazipur where she started working as a maid for the couple a year ago.

Mostafa allegedly had promised the victim's mother that he would give her Tk 500 a month if she would let her daughter work in Gazipur.

The couple tortured the child brutally whenever she wanted to go home, alleged the mother.

Hearing about it, Mostafa took her home on Wednesday but seeing the torture marks on the child's body, locals admitted her to the health complex in Haimchar. They also handed Mostafa over to police.

Meanwhile, doctors said the girl would take at least 15 to 20 days to recover.

It seems that the child's head was hit on tiles. Besides, different parts of her body appear to have been seared with hot kitchen utensils. There were also burn marks apparently from electric wires on her body, Depen Dey, a doctor at Haimchar Health Complex, said yesterday.

Later in the day, the victim was shifted to Chandpur Sadar Hospital for better treatment.

The district administration and the local police were looking after her treatment. Besides, a Bangladeshi expatriate in the US Pallabi Chowdhury donated Tk 25,000 for her treatment after learning about the incident from the media, said Mohammed Abdus Sabur Mandal, deputy commissioner of Chandpur.

The money was handed over to the victim's family, he added.

S SUDAN FIGHTING

Refugee numbers soaring past 1m mark: UN

AFP, Geneva

Renewed fierce fighting has pushed nearly 200,000 people to flee South Sudan since July, sending the number of refugees from the war-scarred nation past one million, the UN said yesterday.

"The number of South Sudanese refugees sheltering in neighbouring countries has this week passed the one million mark," the United Nations refugee agency said in a statement.

Another 1.61 million people are displaced inside the country, it said.

South Sudan, the world's youngest nation, has thus joined Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia as countries that have produced more than one million refugees, UNHCR said.

"Five years after independence, this is a very sad milestone," spokesman Leo Dobbbs told reporters in Geneva.

South Sudan, which gained independence in July 2011, descended into war just two and a half years later when President Salva Kiir in December 2013 accused his former deputy Riek Machar of plotting a coup.

Numerous attempts to shore up a fragile truce have failed, and in a major setback to peace efforts, fresh clashes erupting in Juba on July 8 this year between Kiir's guards and troops loyal to Machar.

During the fighting in July, Machar, who had been persuaded to return to Juba to join a national unity govern-

ment agreed under a peace deal, fled the country to Khartoum.

Since the fresh violence in July, more than 185,000 people have fled the country, UNHCR said, adding that most of those fleeing were women and children.

"They include survivors of violent attacks, sexual assault, children (who) have been separated from their parents ... and people in need of urgent medical care," the agency said.

It said refugees arriving in neighbouring countries were reporting heavy fighting across the southern Greater Equatoria region, where armed groups were killing civilians, sexually assaulting women and girls and recruiting young boys.

"Many refugees arrive exhausted after days walking in the bush and going without food or water," UNHCR said.

Most of those most recently uprooted have crossed into Uganda, which counts 143,164 recent arrivals, bringing the total number of South Sudanese refugees in the country to nearly 375,000.

And there is no end in sight: over the past week alone, more than 20,000 new arrivals were registered in Uganda.

A surge of people has meanwhile also entered western Ethiopia's Gambella region in the past week, while others have headed to Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic.

Five sentenced over Corsica 'burkini' clashes

AFP, Bastia

A Corsica court yesterday sentenced five men to up to two years in prison over a mass beach brawl on the French Mediterranean island that reportedly began after tourists took pictures of Muslim bathers.

The violence last month in Sisco, in the island's north, left five people injured, prompting the mayor of the village to ban the Islamic burkini swimsuit initially thought to have been at the centre of the row.

Around 100 police were deployed to quell the August 13 clashes between locals and families of North African origin from another part of the island.

Hundreds of people gathered outside the court in Bastia on Thursday to support two local men who faced charges over the incident alongside three brothers of Moroccan origin.

Mustapha Benhaddou was sentenced to two years in prison for armed violence, while his brothers Abdelillah and Jamal both received suspended sentences of six months.

Villagers Lucien Straboni and Pierre Baldi were handed suspended sentences of one year and eight months respectively.

Of the brothers only Mustapha was present in court, the others telling their lawyers they feared for their safety following several anti-Islam demonstrations and attacks on the island.

"There are fractures in French and Corsican society, but those are not what we are dealing with in this case, which concerns a simpler, seedier problem," prosecutor Nicolas Bessone told the court.

The clashes came amid heightened tension in France after a string of attacks claimed by the Islamic State group, including the July 14 massacre in the southern city of Nice when a Tunisian ploughed a truck into crowds celebrating Bastille Day, killing 86 people.

In Corsica last December, angry protesters vandalised a Muslim prayer hall and trashed copies of the Koran after an assault on firefighters that was blamed on local youths of Arab origin.

Sisco is one of around 30 French towns that have moved to ban the burkini, though the country's top administrative court has suspended the move in most cases.

But the Council of State allowed Sisco to keep its burkini ban, saying it was justified on public order grounds - even though prosecutors ruled out any connection between the beach brawl and the full-body swimsuit.

Sisco's mayor Ange-Pierre Vivoni described the court's ruling as "a relief for me and local people".

He has told AFP that he brought in the ban because he "risked having deaths on my hands".

Gabon under internet blackout as it awaits key poll ruling

AFP, Libreville

An internet curfew and social media blackout has sparked outrage and wreaked havoc on businesses in oil-rich Gabon, as citizens keenly await a pivotal ruling challenging President Ali Bongo's contested re-election.

"We are losing a lot of money," fumed Steeve Ndong, who oversees the website of a mobile telephone company.

"The figures of the page I look after are in the red. We are now down to 600 hits a day against between 6,000 and 10,000 normally," he said.

"It has lasted for 15 days," added Raoul, a doctor in the seaside capital Libreville, adding "(and) we speak of democracy."

Internet connections were partially restored on Thursday between six in the morning until 8 at night and then cut off later. Social media such as Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp remain blocked.

Gabon, which has been ruled by the Bongo family for nearly 50 years, has been wracked by violent protests after the sitting president was declared the winner of the August 27 polls.

Bongo's rival Jean Ping, a veteran diplomat, took his challenge of the result -- which gave Bongo a winning margin of a mere 6,000 votes -- to the country's top court.

Riots broke out following the August 31 announcement of the results, the National Assembly was torched and there were attacks on Ping's headquarters. Bongo meanwhile claimed that Ping had instigated

the violence.

Ping has asked for a recount in the ruling family's stronghold of Haut-Ogooue province, where Bongo won more than 95 percent of votes on a reported turnout of more than 99 percent.

Ping says more than 50 people were killed in post-electoral violence, but the interior ministry says the toll was three dead.

Meanwhile, anxious Gabonese awaiting news of the Constitutional Court's decision on Ping's appeal now only have recourse to the country's tightly-controlled state media and television.

"To know what's really happening we have to wait for the evening news on international TV channels," said a student who identified herself as only Marie.

Another young woman, Laure, said she had "anticipated" the crackdown and installed a virtual private network or VPN on her smartphone to avoid "censorship."

"We have access to Facebook," said the 23-year-old Ping supporter.

Communications Minister Alain-Claude Bilie-By-Nze told AFP that the erratic services were due to "disruptions" in the network and nothing more.

"We are all victims," he said. "Like everybody else, we too cannot work normally and we hope that the links will be re-established quickly," he said.

But this line fails to convince many. "The government is trying to make us believe that business is back to normal but that's rubbish," exclaimed Paul, who works in a Libreville bank.

US declares French jihadist Diaby 'global terrorist'

AFP, Washington

The United States yesterday designated French jihadist recruiter Omar Diaby a "global terrorist" subject to US economic sanctions, the State Department said.

The 40-year-old Al-Nusra Front militant, who also uses the name Omar Omsen, became notorious last year for faking his own death in order to leave Syria for surgery.

According to the designation, Diaby leads a group of 50 French volunteers who traveled to Syria and signed up with the Al-Nusra Front, Al-Qaeda's