

## Triple suicide bombings kill 30 in Nigeria

Attacks bear hallmarks of Boko Haram jihadist group

AFP, Kano

Thirty people were killed late Sunday in a triple suicide bombing in northeast Nigeria, emergency services reported, in an attack bearing the hallmarks of the Boko Haram jihadist group.

Three bombers detonated their explosives outside a hall in Konduga, 38 kilometres (24 miles) from the Borno state capital Maiduguri, where football fans were watching a match on TV.

"The death toll from the attack has so far increased to 30. We have over 40 people injured," Usman Kachalla, head of operations at the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), said yesterday.

An earlier toll from the blasts, the bloodiest in months, gave 17 dead and 17 wounded.

The attack happened around 9:00 pm (1800 GMT), Ali Hassan, the leader of a self-defence group in the town, said.

The owner of hall prevented one of the bombers from entering the packed venue.

## Halt Rampal

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about implementing such a risky project near the Sundarbans without conducting any Strategic Environment Assessment.

"To overcome the situation, all the activities on building coal-based power plants in Rampal, Taltoli and Kolapara have to be suspended immediately before the upcoming Baku meeting and steps should be taken to implement an action plan as per the directive of Unesco World Heritage Committee."

The World Heritage Centre, which enlisted the Sundarbans as natural heritage in 1997, has been raising objections about the power plant since the government took the initiative for the construction of Rampal power plant.

The centre also requested the government to invite its mission to prepare a set of corrective measures to protect the Sundarbans from any potential environmental danger.

Although the government has always claimed that the power plant would not pose any threat to the Sundarbans, the Unesco and environmentalist groups were never convinced.

## 11-year-old

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The girl was sent to the One-Stop Crisis Centre at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, the SI said.

Meanwhile, a police team of the same police station yesterday arrested a madrasa teacher for allegedly molesting a 10-year-old boy from Tenguri area in Ashulia.

Arif Billah, 30, a teacher of Tenguri Madrasa, was arrested following a case filed by the victim's family, said Javed Masud, inspector (investigation) of Ashulia Police Station.

Both arrestees were produced before a Dhaka Court with a remand prayer of seven days for each.



This handout picture released and taken yesterday by the Turkish coastguard shows illegal migrants being rescued after their boat sank in the Aegean sea, off the coast of southwestern Turkey. Turkish coastguard said 12 people died and 31 others had been rescued. It was not immediately known which country or countries the migrants were from.

PHOTO: AFP

## Sohel Taj wants his nephew back

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expect that such incidents would not happen to any other citizen. Today, it is my nephew. Tomorrow, it may be your brother and the day after it may happen to your son. Such an incident is not expected at all."

The former state minister said the identity of a person does not matter. "My identity also does not matter. The state should be governed by the rule of law. It's not expected that someone will face such a consequence in a state where justice prevails."

In a Facebook post on Saturday, Sohel Taj said, "I request those, who have carried out the incident, to return Sourav to his family. Otherwise, your

identities will be made public. We know who are behind the incident."

Asked about the identities of the abductors, the former state minister at the press conference said news has already been published that Sourav received a call from a phone and the phone number belongs to an official of a state agency in Dhaka.

"Eight days have passed and now we only wish we will get him back alive and unharmed."

Sohel Taj said he informed the home minister and the inspector general of police about the matter. They were trying to find the whereabouts of his nephew.

The victim's father filed a general diary with Panchlaish Police Station in Chattogram on June 10 about his son's going missing.

### FAMILY'S CLAIMS

Reading out a written statement, Sourav's mother made an emotional appeal to the prime minister about getting back her 27-year-old son.

She said Sourav met the woman after the Bangla film "Bengali Beauty" earned fame at home and abroad. He had assisted in making the movie.

Later, they continued the relationship through social media. At one stage, the woman told Sourav

that they must marry over phone to continue the relationship, the mother said.

But the woman's father married her off to another man without her consent, she told the press conference.

She said the marriage ended in divorce sometime in 2018 and the woman's father blamed Sourav for it. He also threatened Sourav and his family members with life.

The mother of the victim said her son was earlier picked up on several occasions by different law enforcement and intelligence agencies. He was interrogated about his relationship with the woman.

## Morsi dies after falling ill in court

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breathing," the office of the attorney general said in a statement.

"He arrived at the hospital dead at 4.50pm exactly and there were no new, visible injuries found on the body."

One of Morsi's defence lawyers described the moment he received news of his death.

"We heard the banging on the glass cage from the rest of the other inmates and them screaming loudly that Morsi had died," the lawyer, Osama El Helw, told AFP.

"I saw him from afar wheeled out on the stretcher from the courts complex" from Tora, in southern Cairo, said another one of his lawyers,

Abdelmoneim Abdel-Maksoud.

"They prevented us from leaving the court for about 15 minutes," he added, without being able to say which hospital the former president had been transported to.

A judicial source said the former Islamist president had fainted during a break in the court session.

The court officials "had just finished the session for the espionage case and they informed the judge that he had fainted and needed to be transported to a hospital where he later died," he told AFP.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a strong ally of the Islamist president during his brief tenure as Egypt's leader, paid tribute to Morsi

and called him a "martyr".

- Qatar emir's 'deep sorrow' - Qatar's ruler Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, another strong backer of Morsi, took to Twitter to say "we received with deep sorrow the news of the sudden death of former President Dr. Mohammed Morsi".

Morsi spent just one turbulent year in office after the 2011 uprising. He was toppled in a military overthrow after millions took to the streets demanding his resignation.

The Islamist leader has been in prison since his ouster on trial for several cases including for spying for Iran, Qatar and militant groups such as Hamas in the Gaza Strip. He was

also accused of plotting terror acts.

He was sentenced to death in May 2015 for his role in jailbreaks during the uprising that ousted his predecessor, longtime autocrat Hosni Mubarak.

Since his overthrow on July 3, 2013, his former defence minister now President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has waged an ongoing crackdown targeting his supporters from the Muslim Brotherhood with thousands jailed and hundreds facing death sentences.

Sarah Leah Whitson, Human Rights Watch Middle East director, tweeted "This is terrible but ENTIRELY predictable, given government failure to allow him adequate medical care".

## UN

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freedom of movement and access to livelihoods, almost entirely denied.

The letter pointed out that those in the old "closed" camps or newly built camps were still suffering the same indignities, with no access to "basic services" or "livelihood opportunities". Even the location of the camps has remained virtually unchanged.

A UN official in Myanmar, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said: "The government plan to build permanent housing on or next to the camps makes it very clear that the apartheid-like separation will be permanent and therefore crosses a red line for continual support to the camps."

Rohingyas have long been one of the most persecuted ethnic groups in Myanmar. The 2012 violence, which saw hundreds of thousands of Rohingya homes destroyed, was followed in October 2016 and August 2017 by security operations that drove around 800,000 people over the border to Bangladesh. About half a million are estimated to remain in Myanmar.

This is the first known attempt by the UN to adopt a tougher policy on camp closures, following months of warnings contained in a series of damning internal assessments on the government's actions and the risk of complicity in abuses if international agencies continued to provide assistance.

A UN document written in September 2018, noted that "the only scenario that is unfolding before our eyes is the implementation of a policy of apartheid with the permanent segregation of all Muslims, the vast majority of whom are stateless Rohingya, in central Rakhine."

"The government's current strategy would essentially formalise and entrench a system of segregation that would perpetuate human rights violations for years to come," it added.

The UN Myanmar's decision comes at a time when Bangladesh has blamed its neighbor of not creating conducive conditions for return of Rohingya and a campaign of misinformation against Bangladesh.

"The international community remains paralysed," the UN official in Myanmar told The Guardian.

"The status quo cannot continue, and unless we see concrete progress towards restoring Rohingya rights, those providing support or assistance in Rakhine - aid agencies, donor states, or others - risks being complicit in the state's enforced segregation and crimes against humanity."

A UN spokesperson confirmed of a letter sent to Myanmar government on June 7, 2019, but declined to comment on its contents.

## Xi gets ice cream

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that the Russian leader is very popular in China, Russian state news agency TASS reported.

The Chinese president travelled to Russia earlier in June and was the guest of honour at the annual St Petersburg International Economic Forum.

In an interview with TASS ahead of the trip, Xi called Putin his "best and bosom friend," adding he cherished their "deep friendship."

While in Russia, Xi visited Moscow Zoo with Putin, which received two Chinese giant pandas as part of "research cooperation."

## Budget skips

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555,880 migrants went abroad for jobs that year. In next two years, the remittance fell to \$13.6 billion and \$13.5 billion respectively though the number of migrants who went abroad was 7.58 lakh in 2016 and 10.07 lakh in 2017.

Migration experts say exploitation in the labour migration sector, including high recruitment cost, unemployment and underpayment rose in recent years. Many returned home emptyhanded within a few months after going abroad, said Prof Tasneem.

Therefore, lowering recruitment costs and ensuring that each migrant abroad has proper job and regular salary are the most important things that need to be done to increase remittance, she said.

The government must take strong measures against unscrupulous recruiting agents, visa traders and ensure efficient handling of labour disputes in the destination countries, said the professor.

It's astonishing that the allocation for the expatriates' ministry has fallen at a time when the number of migrants is rising, she said.

"It's not that increasing the budget would automatically mean better services. What's required is pro-migrant policies as well as employing the right people in the right place."

Economics Professor Selim Raihan of DU said the proposed cash incentive could be a short-term measure, but not a sustainable one.

The authorities need to work on making the banking channels hassle-free and taking the services to the doorsteps of the migrants as well as their families, he said.

Remitting money via illegal means costs little and is convenient because the hundi traders reach out to the remitters, charge very little and transfer the amount really fast.

Prof Selim said a section of people overseas who are involved in illegal visa trading and gold and drugs smuggling have a demand for foreign currencies. "Unless money laundering and illegal businesses are stopped, cash incentives for remittance will not be sustainable."

The government needs to take long-term measures, including training the jobseekers in skills needed in the global market, he added.

Jalal Uddin Sikder, migration researcher at the University of Liberal Arts, said if the government was really sincere in promoting migrant welfare, it should have taken pro-migrant investment policies.

Also, the government needs to think of digital means of money transfer and establish partnerships with the telecom authorities of the labour destination countries.

"In that case, migrants may remit using their mobile phones," said Jalal Uddin Sikder, a migration researcher.

Anisur Rahman Khan, director (migration) at Awaj Foundation, said a vast majority of the migrants were not happy with the services provided by the Bangladesh embassies abroad.

This frustration sometimes keeps the migrants from remitting through legal channels, he said.

"The clear conclusion is that our state has to better serve the migrants and prove that it cares for them. If that's done, migrants will be fine. The government doesn't need to provide any incentive," Anisur told The Daily Star.

## Former first lady takes lead in Guatemala presidential vote

AFP, Guatemala City

Former first lady Sandra Torres was in the lead after partial results early yesterday from Guatemala's presidential election, following a tumultuous campaign that saw two leading candidates barred and the top electoral crimes prosecutor flee the corruption-weary country.

With 49 percent of votes counted after Sunday's polls, Torres was on just under 24 percent while her closest rival Alejandro Giammattei was on 15 percent, the Electoral Supreme Court (TSE) said.

With a crowded field of 19 candidates, counting has been slow and no one is expected to poll more than the 50 percent required to avoid a runoff on August 11.

After casting her ballot, Torres, of the center-left Unity of Hope party (UNE), said she was "optimistic, we've worked hard... I'll be the first woman president."

Her closest rival, Giammattei, a doctor from the conservative VAMOS party, denounced an "irregular" electoral process after several candidates were excluded from the race to succeed unpopular outgoing president Jimmy Morales.

Morales had called on Guatemalans to turn out in droves to vote, but when he did so he was accosted by a young man who blasted him for being "the worst president in Guatemala's history."

Morales, sporting a Guatemala football jersey, kept his calm, replying: "May God bless you, my friend."

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