

WEST BANK, JERUSALEM CLASHES Israeli forces kill four Palestinians

REUTERS, Ramallah

Israeli forces killed four Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem yesterday, the Palestinian health ministry said, including an Islamic Jihad militant and a man accused by police of stabbing an officer.

The other two fatalities were shot dead by troops during West Bank raids, the ministry said.

Violence in territories where Palestinians seek statehood has surged in recent months after Israel launched a crackdown in response to a spate of lethal street attacks in its cities.

The security situation was among factors contributing to far-right gains in an Israeli election on Tuesday that put conservative former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on track to return to power.

Pressing their crackdown, Israeli commandos raided the northern West Bank town of Jenin, killing the Islamic Jihad militant at a butchershop, locals said.

Another Palestinian who was not claimed by any factions was killed in Jenin and four others wounded, the health ministry said.

In Jerusalem's Old City, Israeli police said a Palestinian stabbed an officer while undergoing a security search. Officers shot the assailant dead, police said, describing him as a resident of East Jerusalem.



Traffic moves along a highway shrouded in heavy smog in New Delhi, India, yesterday. Delhi's 20 million residents effectively breathed smoke yesterday as the air quality index (AQI) breached the "severe" and "hazardous" categories in nearly all monitoring stations of the Indian capital, raising calls to close schools. The AQI exceeded 450 at many places early in the day, according to data from the Central Pollution Control Board. A reading over 400 affects healthy people, with serious impacts on those with existing diseases, the federal government says. The index was over 800 in some pockets of the city.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Myanmar junta responsible for crisis: Jakarta

REUTERS, Jakarta

Myanmar's military government is responsible for a lack of progress on a peace plan agreed with Asean, Indonesia's foreign minister said yesterday, adding the regional bloc has done its part in trying to end hostilities in the strife-torn country.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations has urged Myanmar to implement a peace plan agreed last year to halt a spiral of violence that has gripped the country since the military overthrew an elected government in Feb. 2021.

The plan, agreed about 18 months ago, includes engaging in constructive dialogue, and access for humanitarian aid and a special Asean envoy.

Retno Marsudi, foreign minister of Indonesia, which is due to chair the regional bloc next year, told Reuters that blame for a lack of progress lies with the junta.

"The criticisms shouldn't be aimed at Asean. They should be aimed at the junta," she said in an interview.

"If we're talking about who's to blame, who's failed, it's not us, it's not ASEAN. We did our part."

Asean has a long-standing policy of non-interference in its 10 member states' sovereign affairs, but has faced calls from activists to step up pressure on the junta.

G7 ready to recognise China as 'rival'

Pledges winter help for Ukraine amid Russian assault

AFP, Münster

The G7 is ready to recognise China as a "competitor" and "rival" as Japan prepares to take over the presidency of the group of nations, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said yesterday.

"Japan... repeatedly points out how important it is that we recognise that China has changed in recent years and that it is not only a partner in international issues but also a competitor and much more a rival," Baerbock said ahead of a meeting of the G7 foreign ministers in Muenster.

His comment comes as German Chancellor Olaf Scholz headed yesterday for a controversial visit to Beijing. Scholz has insisted that he will "not ignore controversies" during his trip.

A senior US diplomat told reporters on Wednesday that "what we've seen over the last couple of years is increasing alignment between us and Europe on the challenges posed by China".

Recently in its Security and defence strategies, the US has announced China as the main competitor globally, saying the Asian giant is the only country that has the means to pose challenge to Washington.

But Scholz's planned visit has nevertheless been met with scepticism from Washington.

Baerbock also said G7 will not allow Russia to inflict "starvation" on Ukrainians this winter as a

result of its assault on the country.

"We will not allow the brutality of this war to lead to masses of elderly people, children, young people and families dying in the coming winter months," German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said ahead of a meeting of the group's foreign ministers in the western city of Muenster.

The club of wealthy nations are expected to affirm their support for Ukraine in its fight against Russia during the two-day meeting in Germany.

"Russia has chosen a new method of warfare by trying to let people starve, die of thirst and freeze to death," Baerbock said.

"This is exactly what we, as G7 partners, will try to prevent with everything we have, just as we will try to prevent the other perfidious methods of Russian warfare."

Baerbock listed generators, heaters, container housing, tents, beds and blankets as some of the items that will be part of a "winter aid package" for Ukraine.

Diplomatic sources said the G7 ministers would focus on "ways in which we can support Ukraine", also including financial and military aid.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba was set to address the conference via a video link on Thursday, another diplomatic source said.

At their German meeting, the G7 foreign ministers are also expected to discuss recent unrest in Iran and the energy crisis in Europe as winter approaches.



N Korea ICBM launch appears to have failed

AFP, Seoul

North Korea unsuccessfully fired an intercontinental ballistic missile yesterday during a new salvo of launches, the South Korean military said, with Washington urging all nations to enforce sanctions on Pyongyang.

The launches prompted South Korea and the United States to extend their ongoing joint air drills, the largest ever such exercises, citing North Korea's "provocations".

People in parts of northern Japan were ordered to seek shelter during the North's latest launches, which included two short-range missiles.

The launches come as Seoul and Washington stage their largest ever joint air drills, involving hundreds of warplanes from both sides.

Pyeongyang has called the exercise, dubbed Vigilant Storm, "an aggressive and provocative military drill targeting the DPRK", and warned that, if it continues, Seoul and Washington will "pay the most horrible price in history."

Gujarat goes to polls next month

REUTERS, Mumbai

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat will go to the polls next month, the election commission said yesterday, a vote that is likely to offer a clue to his party's prospects in a general election due by 2024. Modi remains popular despite criticism of inflation and unemployment, and his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) expects to emerge victorious in state assembly elections in Gujarat in the west, and in Himachal Pradesh in the north. The Hindu-nationalist BJP has been in power in Gujarat since 1998 and Modi served as its chief minister for nearly 13 years before becoming prime minister when a BJP-led coalition won power in 2014. The Gujarat assembly polls will be in two phases, on Dec. 1 and Dec. 5, the Election Commission of India said. Votes will be counted on Dec. 8 along with those from Himachal Pradesh, where polls will be held on Nov. 12.

Another teen 'killed' as Iran protests rage on

AFP, Paris

Iranians yesterday staged new protest actions in defiance of a crackdown by the authorities as a rights group said an 18-year-old became the latest teen killed in clashes in the northwest. Iran has for over six weeks been gripped by protests sparked by the death of Mahsa Amini who had been arrested by the notorious morality police -- a movement that poses the biggest challenge to the Islamic republic since the 1979 revolution. The clerical leadership under Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, 83, has responded with a crackdown that as well as killing dozens has seen 1,000 people charged so far and according to activists risking the death penalty.

'Unblock' roads

Bolsonaro asks supporters after polls defeat

AFP, Sao Paulo

Brazil's outgoing President Jair Bolsonaro asked participants in what he said were "legitimate" protests to "unblock the roads" and demonstrate elsewhere Wednesday as they push for military intervention to keep him in power. The far-right leaders' supporters are rallying in front of military installations in Brazil's major cities and have blocked highways in more than half the country's states. The demonstrators, unwilling to accept the results of Bolsonaro's Sunday election defeat to leftist ex-president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, have now clogged autoroutes and caused nationwide disruptions for three straight days. "I want to make an appeal to them: Unblock the roads," Bolsonaro said late Wednesday. The blockages do "not seem to me to be part of legitimate demonstrations."



Advertisement for Bangladesh Development Bank (BDBL) regarding the Bangladesh Development Bank (BDBL) Public Limited Company. It includes the BDBL logo, contact information (www.bdbl.com.bd), and a list of 11 branches across Bangladesh with their respective services and locations.

Advertisement for the Bangladesh Government regarding the recruitment of 100 staff for the Begumganj, Noyakhali. It includes the Bangladesh Government logo, the name of the recruitment commission, the email address (begumganj@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd), and a detailed list of 19 positions with their respective duties, qualifications, and salaries.