

Kurdish Forces Retake Parts Of Iraq's Largest Dam

BY DIAA HADID
Associated Press

IRBIL, Iraq — Aided by U.S. and Iraqi airstrikes, Kurdish forces Sunday wrested back part of Iraq's largest dam from Islamic militants who had captured it less than two weeks ago, security officials said.

The U.S. began targeting fighters from the Islamic State with airstrikes Aug. 8, allowing Kurdish forces to fend off an advance on their regional capital of Irbil and to help tens of thousands of members of religious minorities escape the extremists' onslaught.

Recapturing the entire Mosul Dam and the territory surrounding its reservoir would be a significant victory against the Islamic State group, which has seized swaths of northern and western Iraq and northeastern Syria. The dam on the Tigris supplies electricity and water to a large part of the country.

The Kurdish forces, known as peshmerga, launched the operation early Sunday to retake the Mosul Dam, said Gen. Tawfik Desty, a Kurdish commander, after a day of U.S. and Iraqi airstrikes pushed back Islamic State fighters.

A spokesman for the peshmerga said the clashes were moving eastward.

"The west is in control of peshmerga. But there are some battles taking place in the (east) right now," said Halgurd Hekmat, peshmerga spokesman.

Another commander confirmed the information, saying that by Sunday evening, peshmerga forces had crossed the Tigris to the broad plains held by the Islamic State.

The U.S. military conducted 14 airstrikes Sunday, damaging or destroying 10 armed vehicles, seven Humvees, two armored personnel carriers and one checkpoint, according to a statement by the Central Command. On Saturday, it carried out nine airstrikes near the dam, destroying four armored personnel carriers, seven armed vehicles, two Humvees and another armored vehicle, the command said.

The peshmerga, the fighting force of the largely autonomous Kurdish region of northern Iraq, surrounded the Islamic State-held city of Tel Kayf after taking the nearby town of Tel Kasouf, said the commander, who spoke on condition of anonymity in line with military regulations.

The advance of Kurdish forces was hindered by roadside bombs and buildings rigged with explosives, planted by retreating Islamic State fighters, he said.

"They have reached inside the dam. There is no fighting, just the (roadside) bombs, and the abandoned buildings are all rigged with explosives," he said. "We will continue to advance and advance until we are given further instruction."

The commander said the evening advance occurred after the Iraqi government delivered 16 military Humvees, at least one with a mechanized bomb-disposal unit that was dismantling the roadside explosives.

Even as they advanced around the dam in northern Iraq, the commander said fighting forces were so poorly armed that he did not believe they could hold onto captured territory without a fast infusion of weapons — or continued U.S. airstrikes.

"We don't have the right weapons," he said.

Troubled relations between the Kurds and the central government in

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Federal Autopsy Ordered In Missouri Teen's Death

BY NIGEL DUARA AND
JIM SUHR
Associated Press

FERGUSON, Mo. — Attorney General Eric Holder on Sunday ordered a federal medical examiner to perform another autopsy on a black Missouri teenager whose fatal shooting by a white police officer has spurred a week of rancorous and sometimes-violent protests in suburban St. Louis.

The "extraordinary circumstances" surrounding the death of 18-year-old Michael Brown and a request by Brown's family members prompted the order, Department of Justice spokesman Brian Fallon said in a statement.

"This independent examination will take place as soon as possible," Fallon said. "Even after it is complete, Justice Department officials still plan to take the

state-performed autopsy into account in the course of their investigation."

As night fell Sunday in Ferguson, another peaceful protest quickly deteriorated after marchers pushed toward one end of a street. Police attempted to push them back by firing tear gas, shouting over a bullhorn that the protest was no longer peaceful.

Many of the marchers retreated, but a group of about 100 stood defiantly about two blocks away until getting hit by another volley.

The Justice Department already had deepened its civil rights investigation into the shooting. A day earlier, officials said 40 FBI agents were going door-to-door gathering information in the Ferguson neighborhood where Brown, who was unarmed, was shot to death Aug. 9 in the street.

A federally conducted au-

topsy "more closely focused on entry point of projectiles, defensive wounds and bruises" might help that investigation, said David Weinstein, a former federal prosecutor who supervised the criminal civil rights section of Miami's U.S. attorney's office. The move is "not that unusual," he added.

Federal authorities also want to calm any public fears that no action will be taken on the case, Weinstein said.

President Barack Obama, who has been getting regular updates on the situation in Ferguson while on vacation, was to be briefed by Holder sometime after returning Sunday to the White House.

The Justice Department's announcement followed the first night of a state-imposed curfew in Ferguson, which ended with tear gas and seven arrests after police

dressed in riot gear used armored vehicles to disperse defiant protesters.

Missouri State Highway Patrol Capt. Ron Johnson said protesters were not the reason for the police reaction early Sunday after the midnight curfew took effect. He cited a report of people who had broken into a barbecue restaurant and taken to the roof, and a man who flashed a handgun in the street as armored vehicles approached the protesters.

At a Sunday rally, Johnson said he had met members of Brown's family and the experience "brought tears to my eyes and shame to my heart."

"When this is over," he told the crowd, "I'm going to go in my son's room. My black son, who wears his pants sagging, who wears his hat cocked to the side, got

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Divisions Emerge Among Palestinians

CAIRO (AP) — The Palestinians appeared divided Sunday as the clock was winding down on the latest Gaza cease-fire, with officials saying Hamas was still opposed to a compromise Egyptian proposal that would ease the closure of the territory, while other factions, including delegates representing President Mahmoud Abbas, were inclined to accept.

Hamas officials said they were holding out in hopes of getting more concessions in the Egyptian-mediated talks. With a temporary truce set to expire late Monday, a range of outcomes remained possible, including a return to fighting that has brought great devastation to Gaza, an unofficial understanding that falls short of a formal negotiated deal or yet another extension in negotiations.

The negotiations are aimed at ending the latest war between Israel and Hamas-led militants in Gaza. Nearly 2,000 Palestinians have been killed — mostly civilians — and more than 10,000 people have been wounded since the war began July 8, according to United Nations figures. In Israel, 67 people have been killed, all but three of them soldiers.

The indirect talks have been going on, through Egyptian mediators, since early last week. As Palestinian and Israeli negotiators returned to Cairo on Sunday following a weekend of consultations across the Middle East, the gaps remained wide.

The current five-day cease-fire is due to end Monday night at midnight (2100 GMT).

Ebola Clinic Looted In Liberia

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) — Liberian officials fear Ebola could soon spread through the capital's largest slum after residents raided a quarantine center for suspected patients and took items including bloody sheets and mattresses.

The violence in the West Point slum occurred late Saturday and was led by residents angry that patients were brought to the holding center from other parts of Monrovia, Tolbert Nyenswah, assistant health minister, said Sunday.

Up to 30 patients were staying at the center and many of them fled at the time of the raid, said Nyenswah. Once they are located they will be transferred to the Ebola center at Monrovia's largest hospital, he said.

West Point residents went on a "looting spree," stealing items from the clinic that were likely infected, said a senior police official, who insisted on anonymity because he was not authorized to brief the press. The residents took medical equipment and mattresses and sheets that had bloodstains, he said. Ebola is spread through bodily fluids including blood, vomit, feces and sweat.

"All between the houses you could see people fleeing with items looted from the patients," the official said, adding that he now feared "the whole of West Point will be infected."

can Lung Association, Easter Seals, the Epilepsy Foundation, the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the National Kidney Foundation and United Cerebral Palsy. All supported the law.

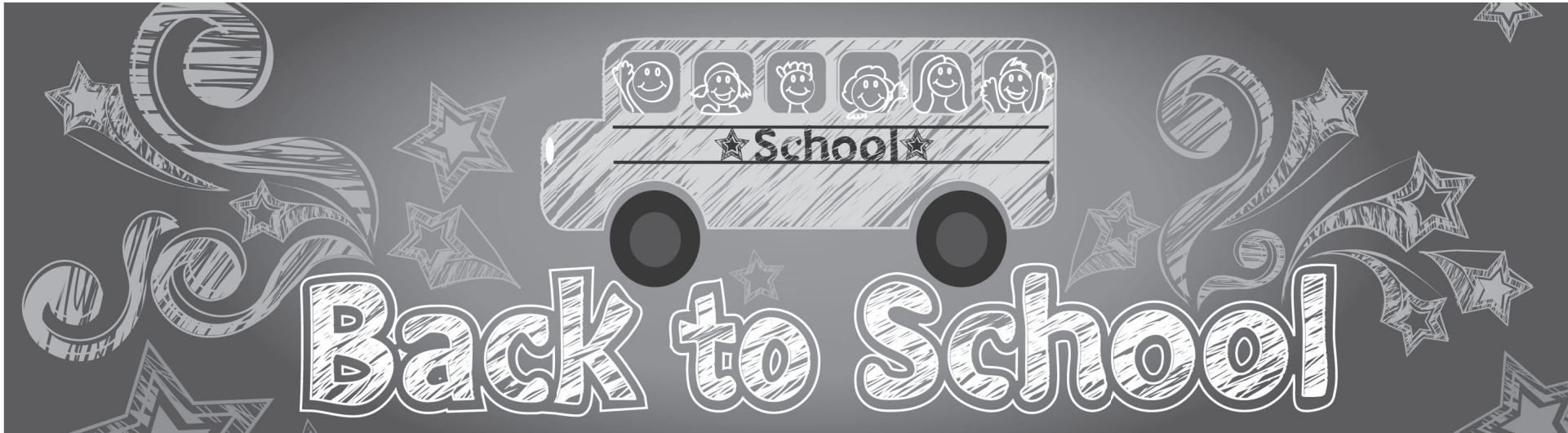
Texas Gov. Rick Perry Defends Veto

WASHINGTON (AP) — Texas Gov. Rick Perry on Sunday defended the veto that led a grand jury to indict him on two felony counts of abuse of power, noting that even some Democrats have questioned the move by prosecutors.

"I stood up for the rule of law in the state of Texas, and if I had to do it again I would make exactly the same decision," Perry, a potential candidate for the 2016 Republican presidential nomination, said.

Already the longest-serving governor in state history, Perry has made it clear that he plans to complete his third and final term in January as planned. In an interview with "Fox News Sunday," the governor noted that David Axelrod, a former adviser to President Barack Obama, had called the indictment "sketchy" while Harvard Law professor Alan Dershowitz had questioned the move.

"Across the board you're seeing people weigh in and reflecting that this is way outside of the norm. This is not the way that we settle differences, political differences in this country," Perry said. "You don't do it with indictments. We settle our political differences at the ballot box."



Backpack safety can prevent serious injuries

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates there are more than 7,300 backpack-related injuries per year. Children routinely carry more than the recommended weight in school backpacks and, compounding the problem, also carry their bags incorrectly.

A backpack that is too heavy may cause

- * red marks on the shoulders or back from the straps
- * tingling or numbness in the arms and back
- * changes in posture when wearing the backpack, and
- * pain anywhere in the back.

To compound these problems, which also may include nerve damage resulting from pressure on nerves in the shoulders, children should lighten their loads and carry backpacks correctly. The following tips are some additional ways youngsters can **prevent backpack-related injuries**.

- * Carry only necessary items. Children should only carry what is required for that particular school day in their backpacks. If teachers routinely have students carry home many heavy books, parents can consult with the teachers to see if there are other options.
- * Distribute weight evenly. Items in the backpack should be spread out to distribute the weight across the entire back. Heavier items should be at the bottom of the pack.
- * Use both straps. Using only one strap shifts the backpack weight to one side, causing the back and shoulders to strain. Many orthopedists have reported treating children with back or shoulder pain as the result of carrying backpacks incorrectly.
- * Choose the correct backpack size. The size of the backpack should match the scale of the child and should rest evenly in the middle of the child's back.

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