

Syria: Rebel Rivals Fight At Border Crossing

BEIRUT (AP) — New chaos engulfed Syria's civil war Monday as Palestinian supporters and opponents of the embattled regime were swept up in intense fighting in Damascus, while rival rebel groups clashed over control of a Turkish border crossing.

The rare infighting — accompanied by car bombs, airstrikes and artillery shells that killed or maimed dozens of people — heightened fears that if Syrian President Bashar Assad falls, the disparate factions battling the regime will turn on each other.

A suicide bomber detonated his explosives-laden car near an army checkpoint in Hama province, killing 50 soldiers in one of the deadliest single attacks targeting pro-Assad troops in the 19-month uprising, according to activists. Eleven civilians died when a bomb exploded in a central Damascus neighborhood, state media said, and activists reported at least 20 rebels killed in air raid on the northern town of Harem.

"It's the worst-case scenario many feared in Syria," said Fawaz Gerges, director of the Middle East Center at the London School of Economics. "It's an all-out war."

The fighting in the capital of Damascus was some of the worst since July, when rebels took over several neighborhoods, only to be bombed out by regime forces days later. Shortly after those battles, rebels moved on Syria's largest city, Aleppo, and it has become a major front in the civil war since then.

Israeli Security Chiefs Opposed Order For Alert

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's prime minister ordered the military to go on high alert for a looming attack on Iran's nuclear program two years ago, but backed off following strong objections from senior security officials, a respected Israeli news program reported Monday.

The report exposed a deep rift between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his top security officials over the wisdom of attacking Iran but also indicated that Israel was much closer to carrying out a strike at that time than was previously known.

Channel 2 TV's flagship investigative program "Uvda," or "Fact," reported that toward the end of a meeting in 2010 Netanyahu and his defense minister, Ehud Barak, ordered Israel's military chief and director of the Mossad espionage agency to put the country on "P Plus" status — code for pre-attack mode on Iran.

The report said the officials were shocked. Then-military chief Lt. Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi warned that Israel's enemies would notice the measure, which might touch off a war. "This is not something you do if you are not sure you will ultimately want to carry it out," he was quoted by unidentified close associates as saying. "This accordion produces music when you play with it."

Meir Dagan, the Mossad chief at the time, was even blunter, telling the leaders that without seeking formal approval from Netanyahu's Security Cabinet, a decision-making body of government ministers, they were "taking an illegal decision."

Zoo: 2-Year-Old Boy Killed By Wild Dogs

PITTSBURGH (AP) — A 2-year-old boy who fell into an exhibit of African wild dogs was killed by the animals, not the fall, the president of the Pittsburgh Zoo said Monday, adding a horrific coda to a tragedy that has devastated staff and shocked patrons.

The boy's mother had picked him up and put him on top of a railing at the edge of a viewing deck late Sunday morning when he lost his balance and fell, said Barbara Baker, CEO and president of the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium. There was a safety net below the railing, but it failed to catch him and the boy dropped more than 10 feet into the enclosure, she said.

"The child was so small that he bounced. He bounced twice and then he bounced into the exhibit," said Baker, tearing up at a news conference Monday afternoon.

Prosecutor: Soldier Had Victims' Blood On Him

JOINT BASE LEWIS-McCHORD, Wash. (AP) — A caped figure captured on surveillance video came running out of the darkness to the edge of a remote Army outpost in southern Afghanistan. Blood was smeared on his face, prosecutors said, and soaked into his clothes.

Less than a mile away, 16 Afghans, including nine children, were dead, some of their bodies on fire in two villages.

As fellow soldiers stopped him at the base's gate, Staff Sgt. Robert Bales was incredulous, prosecutors said. Then, as he was taken into custody, Bales said: "I thought I was doing the right thing."

The details, from a prosecutor as well as Bales' comrades, emerged Monday as a preliminary hearing in his case opened, offering the clearest picture yet of one of the worst atrocities of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

The attack on March 11 prompted the U.S. to halt combat operations for days in the face of protests, and it was a month before military investigators could reach the crime scenes.

Bales, 39, faces 16 counts of premeditated murder and six counts of attempted murder. The hearing could last up to two weeks and will help determine whether the case goes to a court martial.

Study Examines Multivitamins And Disease

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Multivitamins might help lower the risk for cancer in healthy older men but do not affect their chances of developing heart disease, new research suggests.

Two other studies found fish oil didn't work for an irregular heart-beat condition called atrial fibrillation, even though it is thought to help certain people with heart disease or high levels of fats called triglycerides in their blood.

The bottom line: Dietary supplements have varied effects and whether one is right for you may depend on your personal health profile, diet and lifestyle.

"Many people take vitamin supplements as a crutch," said study leader Dr. Howard Sesso of Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. "They're no substitute for a heart-healthy diet, exercising, not smoking, keeping your weight down," especially for lowering heart risks.

The studies were presented Monday at an American Heart Association conference in Los Angeles.



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Many internationally known geneticists and biologists believe that human life begins at conception. Consider the following statements:

Dr. Hymie Gordon, Chairman of the Department of Genetics at Mayo Clinic, said: "By all the criteria of modern molecular biology, life is present from the moment of conception."

Dr. Jerome Lejeune, genetics professor at the University of Descartes, Paris, said: "After fertilization has taken place a new human being has come into existence."

Professor M. Matthews-Roth, Harvard University Medical School states: "It is scientifically correct to say that an individual human life begins at conception."

Please compare the following Political Platform excerpts before you vote:

Democratic Platform 2012:

"The Democratic Party strongly and unequivocally supports Roe v. Wade and a woman's right to make decisions regarding her pregnancy, including a safe and legal abortion, regardless of ability to pay." (Page 18)

Republican Platform 2012:

"We assert the sanctity of human life and affirm that the unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life which cannot be infringed." (Page 13-14)

We oppose using public revenues to promote or perform abortion or fund organizations which perform or advocate it and will not fund or subsidize health care which includes abortion coverage." (Page 14)

Please vote as your conscience leads you.

Vote FOR life and for those who seek to protect life. Vote for Mitt Romney.

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Superstorm Sandy

Housing For Victims A Concern

BY MEGHAN BARR
AND JENNIFER PELTZ
Associated Press

Government leaders are turning their attention to the next crisis unfolding in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy: finding housing for potentially tens of thousands of people left homeless.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency said it has already dispensed close to \$200 million in emergency housing assistance and has put 34,000 people in the New York and New Jersey metropolitan area up in hotels and motels.

But local, state and federal officials have yet to lay out a specific, comprehensive plan for finding them long-term places to live, even as cold weather sets in. And given the scarcity and high cost of housing in the metropolitan area and the lack of open space, it could prove a monumental undertaking.

For example, can enough vacant apartments be found? Will the task involve huge, Hurricane Katrina-style encampments of trailer homes? And if so, where will authorities put the trailers? In stadiums? Parks?

Authorities cannot answer those questions yet.

"It's not going to be a simple task. It's going to be one of the most complicated and long-term recovery efforts in U.S. history," said Mark Merritt, president of Witt Associates, a Washington crisis management consulting firm founded by former FEMA director James Lee Witt.

Tactics that FEMA used in other disasters could be difficult to apply in the city. For example, Merritt said, it's impossible to set up trailers in people's driveways if everyone lives in an apartment building, and it's harder to find space to set up mobile homes.

Sandy killed more 100 people in 10 states but vented the worst of its fury on New Jersey and New York. A week after the storm slammed the mid-Atlantic and the Northeast, 1.4 million homes and businesses remained in the dark.

Another storm — a nor'easter packing heavy rain and gusts of 50 to 60 mph — was headed for the metropolitan area Wednesday, threatening more flooding and power outages that could undo



AMY NEWMAN/THE RECORD/MCT
Austin Jacobus, 25, tries to salvage the teak floors in her family's home Monday in Manasquan, N.J. Jacobus was mopping out dirty water from flooding due to Sandy.

some of the repairs made in the past few days.

With the temperatures dropping into the 30s overnight, people in dark, unheated homes were urged to go to overnight shelters or daytime warming centers.

Because so many voters have been displaced by the storm, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo issued an executive order allowing people to vote in Tuesday's statewide and presidential elections at any polling place in the state.

"Just because you are displaced doesn't mean you are disenfranchised," Cuomo said. "Compared to what we have had to deal with in the past week, this will be a walk in the park when it comes to voting."

As for long-term housing for the homeless, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said Monday that the government is looking into using everything from hotels and motels to FEMA trailers and prefab homes.

"Given the extent of need, no option is off the table," she said. "All of them will have some place in this puzzle."

Napolitano said the government's first priority is getting people to a warm place where they can eat a hot meal. Beyond that, the government wants to find housing as close to people's homes as possible.

"Whether we'll be able to accomplish that, I couldn't say," she said. "We're just now getting a handle on housing."

Officials have yet to even establish the magnitude of the problem.

In New York City, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said Monday that officials are going door-to-door in hard-hit areas to assess the need for shelter. He said the worst-case estimate is 40,000 people, half of them in public housing.

But he said as many as 20,000 will probably get their heat and power back within a few days. Ultimately, the number of people who need housing could be under 10,000, he said.

In New Jersey, state officials said they are still trying to figure out how many people will need long-term housing. At least 4,000 residents were in New Jersey shelters.

In the meantime, Bloomberg appointed Brad Gair, an emergency management specialist, as chief of housing recovery operations, with responsibility for overseeing the city's efforts to find shelter for those left homeless by the storm.

At a news conference, the mayor asked for patience after reporters pressed Gair for more specifics on how he intended to deal with the problem. Bloomberg pointed out that Gair had been on the job for only four hours.

"I want to assure everyone that every New Yorker who needs a warm place to live and a roof over his or her head is going to have one," Bloomberg said.

In the New York City borough of Staten Island, blue-jacketed FEMA volunteers knocked on doors in a devastated neighborhood, making sure everyone was registered to apply for aid.

Amin and Rachael Alhadad and their four children have been sleeping sitting up in their Jeep. They were supposed to finally meet with FEMA workers on Monday afternoon.

FDA Chief Will Testify At Meningitis Hearing

WASHINGTON (AP) — House lawmakers investigating a nationwide outbreak of deadly meningitis have summoned the head of the Food and Drug Administration to testify at the first congressional hearing on the issue next week.

The Energy & Commerce Committee said Monday that FDA Commissioner Dr. Margaret Hamburg will appear before the committee on Nov. 14. The following day she is scheduled to appear before the Senate health committee, which is also probing the outbreak.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported 419 cases of meningitis illness linked to contaminated steroid shots distributed by New England Compounding Center. Thirty people have died as a result of the outbreak, the agency reported Monday.

Committee staffers said they have also in-

vited Barry Cadden, co-founder of the specialty pharmacy linked to the outbreak. Also invited is James Coffey, director of the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Pharmacy. Staffers say they are awaiting replies from Cadden and Coffey.

Compounding pharmacies traditionally fill special orders placed by doctors for individual patients, turning out a small number of customized formulas each week. But some pharmacies like the NECC have grown into much larger businesses in recent years, supplying bulk orders of medicines to thousands of doctors and hospitals across the country.

In recent weeks, inspectors from the FDA and Massachusetts department of health have reported unsterile conditions at the Framingham, Mass. pharmacy's facilities. The most recent inspection from the FDA uncovered green and yellow residues, water droplets and stand-

ing water in or around production rooms that were supposed to be sterile.

House and Senate lawmakers have called for hearings to examine how the outbreak could have been prevented.

Compounding pharmacies have long operated in a legal gray area between state and federal laws. All pharmacies, including compounding pharmacies, have long been regulated by state pharmacy boards. However, the FDA has attempted to exercise its authority in cases where major problems have arisen. In several instances, federal courts have ruled that the agency overstepped its bounds.

FDA officials said last month that new laws may be needed to clarify the federal government's role in overseeing compounding pharmacies.



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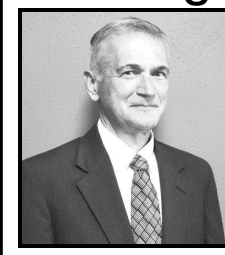
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