

Turks And Kurds Trade Blame For Blasts

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Thousands mourned the 95 victims of Turkey's deadliest attack in years as state inspectors tried Sunday to identify who sent suicide bombers to a rally promoting peace with Kurdish rebels.

The government said Kurdish rebels or Islamic State militants were likely responsible, while mourners accused President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of fomenting violence to gain votes for the ruling party.

No one has claimed responsibility, but the attack bears similarities to a suicide bombing the government blames on the Islamic State group that killed 33 Turkish and Kurdish peace activists near a town bordering Syria in July.

Police detained 14 suspected Islamic State members Sunday in the central Turkish city of Konya, but it wasn't clear if they were related.

Some Turkish media declared that peace itself was under attack. The bombers struck hours before Kurdish rebels battling Turkish security forces followed through with plans to declare a unilateral cease-fire, to reduce tensions leading up to Nov. 1 elections.

No Increase In Social Security Next Year

WASHINGTON (AP) — For just the third time in 40 years, millions of Social Security recipients, disabled veterans and federal retirees can expect no increase in benefits next year, unwelcome news for more than one-fifth of the nation's population.

They can blame low gas prices.

By law, the annual cost-of-living adjustment, or COLA, is based on a government measure of inflation, which is being dragged down by lower prices at the pump.

The government is scheduled to announce the COLA — or lack of one — on Thursday, when it releases the Consumer Price Index for September. Inflation has been so low this year that economists say there is little chance the September numbers will produce a benefit increase for next year.

Prices actually have dropped from a year ago, according to the inflation measure used for the COLA.

Jewish Defenders Stoke Tensions

JERUSALEM (AP) — Jewish and Muslim grassroots groups, self-declared defenders of their faiths, have played a key role in rising Israeli-Palestinian tensions, stepping up activities at a contested Jerusalem shrine at the heart of the current violence.

Each side has accused the other of causing provocations, as religious activists become more organized.

Israel pins much of the blame on a domestic fundamentalist group, the Islamic Movement, saying it whipped up Palestinian anger with claims that Israel is plotting to take over the Muslim-run site. Those claims, dismissed by Israel as incitement, reflect widespread Palestinian fears fueled by the doubling of Jewish visits to the shrine since 2010.

Backed by senior Israeli politicians, activists have become more vocal in demanding Jewish prayer rights on the mount. Some call for the site's partition and the rebuilding of the biblical Jewish Temple that once stood there.

"As more and more Jews are going up, it is clear that this is bringing us closer to the immediate goal of prayer (rights), and afterward, the Temple," said Elishama Sandman, 19, who has led Jewish tours on the mount.

Gun Violence Researchers See No Hope

NEW YORK (AP) — Amid the bloodbaths of 21st-century America, you might think that there would be a lot of research into the causes of gun violence, and which policies work best against it.

You would be wrong.

Gun interests, wary of any possible limits on weaponry, have successfully lobbied for limitations on government research and funding, and private sources have not filled the breach. So funding for basic gun violence research and data collection remains minuscule — the annual sum total for all gun violence research projects appears to be well under \$5 million. A grant for a single study in areas like autism, cancer or HIV can be more than twice that much.

There are public health students who want to better understand rising gun-related suicide rates, recent explosions in firearm murders in many U.S. cities, and mass murders like the one this month at an Oregon community college, where a lone gunman killed nine people.

But many young researchers are staying away from the field. Some believe there's little hope Congress will do anything substantive to reduce gun violence, regardless of what scientists find. And the work is stressful — many who study gun violence report receiving angry emails and death threats from believers in unrestricted gun ownership.

Prince Says Kingdom Will Stay In Charge

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Saudi Prince Turki al-Faisal on Sunday rejected the idea of sharing the administration of the annual hajj pilgrimage with other Muslim nations, saying Riyadh considers it "a matter of sovereignty" and a "privilege."

The senior member of the Saudi royal family spoke to The Associated Press as his country faces mounting criticism in the wake of last month's disastrous crush of pilgrims outside the holy city of Mecca, which killed over 1,400 people, according to an AP count, making it the deadliest annual pilgrimage on record.

Saudi Arabia's regional rival Iran, which lost the largest number of pilgrims, has accused the kingdom of mismanagement and called for an independent body to oversee the hajj.

The royal Al Saud family, which governs Saudi Arabia and for which the country is named after, derives enormous prestige and legitimacy from being the caretakers of the hajj and Islam's holiest sites in Mecca and Medina. King Salman, in line with past Saudi monarchs, holds the title of "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques" in reference to the Grand Mosque in Mecca and the Prophet Muhammad's first mosque ever built in Medina.

Oversight of these holy places and the hajj "is a matter of sovereignty and privilege and service," Prince Turki said.

Obama: 'Clinton Made A Mistake'

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hillary Rodham Clinton's use of a private email server to conduct government business when she served as secretary of state was a mistake but didn't endanger national security, President Barack Obama said during an interview airing Sunday on CBS's "60 Minutes."

Obama said public officials have to be more sensitive about how they handle information and personal data. Yet he also said the criticism of Clinton has been "ginned up" because of politics.



The Golden State Warriors' Stephen Curry carries the NBA championship trophy off the stage after making an appearance with teammates at the Warfield Theater in San Francisco on Saturday. They appeared prior to a fundraising concert by Kanye West and an appearance by President Obama.

Obama Urges Supporters To Stay Engaged, Says He Will Too

BY KEVIN FREKING
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — President Barack Obama on Saturday encouraged supporters to be politically active, saying that he plans to remain so when his presidency concludes and declared, "I'm just getting started."

Obama was in California for four fundraisers, one in San Francisco and three in Los Angeles. NBA star Stephen Curry and other members of the Golden State Warriors warmed up the San Francisco crowd. Those attending the Democratic National Committee fundraiser paid between \$250 and \$10,000.

Obama has been using his fundraising speeches and many others these days to point to progress he said the country has made during the past seven years, including a drop in the unemployment rate and the addition of millions of people to the rolls of those with health insurance.

The president told the 1,000-plus people attending the fundraiser in San Francisco that Republican candidates seeking to succeed him are painting a dismal picture for voters.

"There's almost no measure by which we're not better off than when I took office and when we started this process for change," he said. "But it does kind of make you wonder. Why are so many Republican politicians so down on America? Why are they so grumpy?"

Obama got some of his loudest applause when making the case for changes in the nation's gun laws, saying the amount of gun violence taking place in the U.S. is not normal.

"We know we've got to do something to prevent the kind of gun massacres that we see with growing frequency in this country," he said.

In Los Angeles, Obama attended his first fundraiser at the home of movie director J.J. Abrams. He then went to a fundraiser for the DNC where about 200 supporters contributed up \$33,400. Jamie Foxx and his band performed before Obama spoke.

Obama returned to the gun issue near the close of his remarks at the DNC fundraiser in Los Angeles. He noted that he went to Oregon the day before to visit with families of those killed at the community college. Two

more college shootings occurred on the same day. While some protested during his visit, Obama said he felt just as strongly that such shootings are not inevitable and that the public should encourage lawmakers to take on the gun issue.

At times on Saturday Obama referenced the GOP's struggles to find a replacement for House Speaker John Boehner. He said during his final Los Angeles fundraiser, which supporters paid up to \$33,400 to attend, that even deeply conservative lawmakers are not considered ideologically pure enough.

"At this moment in history, the choices are stark and facts, evidence and values are on our side," he said. "And the other side has gone off the deep end."

The White House said that Obama called Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to express his condolences for the twin explosions Saturday that killed at least 95 people attending a peace rally in Ankara.

Obama was scheduled to go to the San Diego area for golf on Sunday and Monday, then head back to Washington.

Boko Haram Stages Suicide Bombings In Cameroon, Chad

BY CARLEY PETESCH
Associated Press

DAKAR, Senegal — Nigeria's Islamic extremist insurgents Boko Haram are blamed for using teens and women to carry out suicide bombings in neighboring Chad and Cameroon this weekend, killing more than 45 people in what Cameroon's government spokesman said is a move to spread terror as a multinational force prepares to deploy against them.

Two girls between the ages of 13 and 17 carried out suicide bombings in the northern Cameroon village of Kangeleri near Mora town on Sunday, killing at least 9 and wounding 29 others, said Cameroon's Minister of Communications Issa Tchirima Bakary.

The Cameroon explosions come after five coordinated suicide bombings in neighboring Chad on Saturday killed at least 36 people and

wounded some 50 others in a village near Lake Chad that is home to thousands of Nigerians who have fled the extremists' violence. The government said a man, two women and two children carried out the attacks.

The use of girls and women in recent suicide bombings in Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Niger raises fears that Boko Haram is using kidnap victims to target countries that are helping combat the rebels.

"They have shifted their tactics. They have noticed it is impossible to face our forces, so they are now using young girls or young boys with explosives, who go more undetected, in areas they are told to go," said Bakary. He added it is difficult to know if the young girls know that they will die. "We guess that they use the girls who were kidnapped here and there, they brainwash them and use them."

A Nigerian military

explosives expert has told The Associated Press that many of the bombs are remotely controlled, meaning the bomber may not know when the explosives will be detonated.

Boko Haram members are trying to spread terror, after pledging allegiance to the Islamic State group earlier this year, said Bakary.

"As a token of their commitment they have to act," he said. "This is to prove to their master how determined they are. This is the best way to receive money."

The shift also comes as Nigeria and its neighbors prepare to launch a multinational force. Earlier this year Chadian troops helped Nigerian forces drive Boko Haram out of towns and villages in northeastern Nigeria where it had set up a so-called Islamic caliphate. Boko Haram continues cross border hit-and-run attacks and suicide bombings.

Bakary called for more

community self-defense groups, with people trained to neutralize the attackers, until the multinational force is fully prepared.

"Boko Haram knows their days are numbered given it will be impossible to face an army like this one, and to remain in their strongholds. We are going to take them down where they are," he said.

The multinational force, with troops from Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria, Niger and Benin, is growing in numbers, military equipment and intelligence, Bakary said. It's a matter of weeks or months until the necessary intelligence, information and weapons are in place, he said, adding that France, U.S. and China have promised to give training.

Boko Haram's six-year-old uprising has left an estimated 20,000 people dead, according to Amnesty International.

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