

3 die as roadside bomb targets tourist bus near Pyramids in Egypt

Fri, 2018-12-28 20:46

CAIRO: A roadside bomb hit a tourist bus on Friday in an area near the Giza Pyramids, killing two Vietnamese tourists and wounding 12 others, Egypt's Interior Ministry said in a statement.

It said the bus was traveling in the Marioutiyah area near the pyramids when the crude roadside bomb, concealed by a wall, went off. The wounded included 10 Vietnamese tourists. The other two wounded were the Egyptian bus driver and the guide.

Regional broadcaster Al-Arabiya reported that the death toll rose to 3.

The bus was carrying a total of 14 Vietnamese tourists, it added, saying only two of them escaped unharmed.

Egypt has battled Islamic militants for years in the Sinai Peninsula in an insurgency that has occasionally spilled over to the mainland, hitting minority Christians or tourists. However, this is the first attack to target foreign tourists in almost two years.

(With AP)







Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Giza Pyramids](#)

Eminent Egyptologist leads team to discovery of 'vital ramp system' at Great Pyramids
48 hours in Cairo: To experience the Egyptian city's old-world vibe or simply to see the pyramids requires just two days

Israeli gunfire kills a Gazan during border protests

Author:

Reuters

ID:

1546017023337862900

Fri, 2018-12-28 16:50

GAZA: Israeli forces shot and killed a Palestinian man during the latest of weekly protests along the border with Israel on Friday, Palestinian health officials said.

They said Karam Fayyad, 26, was killed and six other people were wounded with live Israeli fire during Friday's protests that went ahead despite stormy weather.

"Troops resorted to live fire after confronting 5,000 rioters, some of who threw rocks and grenades," said an Israeli military spokeswoman.

She added that two Palestinian protesters briefly crossed the fence before returning into Gaza.

Health officials in Gaza, which is run by the Islamist Hamas movement, say more than 220 Palestinians have been killed since they began weekly border protests on March 30 to demand the easing of Israel's blockade on the territory and the right to return to land lost in the 1948 war of Israel's founding.

Israel has ruled out any such right, concerned that the country would lose its Jewish majority.

Alarmed at the bloodshed, Egypt, the United Nations and Qatar have sought ways to improve conditions in the enclave.

Israel withdrew settlers and soldiers from Gaza in 2005 but maintains tight control of its land, air and sea borders. The wider Israeli-Palestinian peace process has been stalled for several years.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Middle East](#)

[Israel](#)

[Gaza](#)

[Palestine](#)

Palestinians bury 4 killed in Gaza protestsIsraeli gunfire kills three Gazans during border protest

[Vatican official urges Iraq's Christians to forgive, rebuild](#)

Author:

By NICOLE WINFIELD | AP

ID:

1546003931156989000

Fri, 2018-12-28 (All day)

VATICAN CITY: The Vatican secretary of state urged Iraqi Christians who have endured years of extremist persecution to forgive, reconcile and rebuild their broken communities as he celebrated Mass Friday in Iraq's largest Christian town.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin has spent the Christmas holidays in Iraq in a show of

Pope Francis' solidarity with the region's Christian minorities, many of whom were forced to flee their homes during the years of extremist violence. Parolin celebrated Mass in the Al-tahera Syro-Catholic Cathedral in Qaraqosh, which was overtaken by Daesh group in 2014. In his homily, Parolin praised those who had refused to renounce their faith and instead resisted and went into exile.

"In God's saving plan, your sacrifices will not be without fruit, as fruitful as the witness of so many martyrs who, from the first centuries of Christianity, bathed this land with their blood and lived their faith heroically to the end," he said.

He urged those families who are now returning not to dwell on revenge but to instead forgive those who wronged them, reconcile and rebuild. Many of the Christian communities of northern Iraq are some of the oldest of the faith, where dialects of Aramaic – the language of Jesus – are still spoken.

"May the pain and violence you have endured never turn into bitterness, and may the heavy yoke of hatred never fall on your shoulders," Parolin told the Iraqi religious leaders and faithful in the cathedral. "Forgiveness is the basis of reconciliation."

In the two years that Daesh held Qaraqosh, militants burned down its churches, destroyed its religious altars and statues, and forced residents to convert or flee. By the time Iraqi forces retook it in 2016, Qaraqosh was practically deserted. Hundreds of families have since returned, and the global Christian community has donated generously to rebuild the churches. There aren't reliable census figures to go by, but by all accounts Qaraqosh was once Iraq's largest Christian town with a population of around 50,000 inhabitants.

But Iraq's Christian numbers have been dwindling since the 2003 US invasion, after which Christians of northern Iraq endured attacks by fundamentalist extremist groups – foremost among them Al-Qaeda.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Iraqi Christians celebrate Christmas one year after Daesh defeat
Iraqis demand US troop pullout

Palestinian PM briefs Arab youth delegation on life under occupation

Thu, 2018-12-27 21:57

AMMAN: The four-day "Towards Victory for Jerusalem" conference in Ramallah, featuring a delegation of youths from seven Islamic countries, concluded on Thursday.

The conference, co-sponsored by the Arab League, was held under the patronage of Jibril Rajoub, head of the Palestinian Football Association and Olympic Committee, and secretary-general of the Fatah Central Committee.

Participants – who came from Jordan, Oman, Bahrain, Libya, Kuwait, Qatar, and Mauritania – toured various areas of Palestine, and spent Dec. 25 in Bethlehem. Before the conference's final session, they were guests of Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah in Ramallah.

A government press release said that Hamdallah “gave a review of the political situation and the suffering under occupation and he spoke about efforts toward national reconciliation as well as international efforts to create a mini state in Gaza.”

Hamdallah called on Hamas “to respond positively to the reconciliation initiative of President Mahmoud Abbas so that Palestinians can face these efforts against the Palestinian cause in a united way,” the statement said.

FASTFACT

A youth delegation from seven Arab countries participated in a four-day conference in Ramallah titled ‘Towards victory for Jerusalem,’ which was concluded on Thursday.

Speaking about Jerusalem in the opening session, Rajoub said that Palestinians and Arabs are united over Jerusalem.

“There is consensus about the Arab context of Jerusalem, which Palestinians – both Christians and Muslims – continue to defend,” he said. He went on to praise “the heroes” who have defended the city over the years, and referred to Jerusalem as “a mosaic of Palestine where Muslims and Christians are living together and fighting for the city’s independence.”

The delegates also heard speeches from a number of leaders and experts from Jerusalem. Hanna Issa, secretary-general of the Islamic Christian Committee for Jerusalem and the Holy Sites, told Arab News that the delegates visited historic sites in Jerusalem and Nablus, Bethlehem and Hebron and witnessed firsthand the reality of life for Palestinians.

“I told the delegates that it is great to see active young people from Arab countries coming to visit their peers in Palestine and that (there should be) further visits that aim at strengthening relations with Jerusalem and Palestine.”

On the closing day, Rajoub expressed his deep appreciation to the delegation for their visit. “The Arab League clearly supports these visits which we hope will continue and increase,” he said, noting that Israel had prevented delegates from Tunisia and Morocco from attending the conference.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Palestine](#)

Palestinian security forces block press conference by parliament speaker
After difficult year, Palestinians pessimistic about future prospects for peace

[Chadian group attacks forces loyal to Haftar in southern Libya](#)

Author:

Thu, 2018-12-27 21:32

BENGHAZI: A Chadian armed group attacked a military camp of forces loyal to Gen. Khalifa Haftar in southern Libya on Thursday, killing one and injuring 13 others, a local official said.

After the toppling of dictator Muammar Qaddafi in the NATO-backed uprising in 2011, fighters from neighboring Chad and Sudan joined the ensuing turmoil. Competing Libyan armed factions frequently accuse each other of deploying mercenaries from sub-Saharan Africa.

The attack took place near Traghen, 902 km south of Tripoli and about 400 km north of the border with Chad. A spokesman for the Traghen municipality said the man killed was a fighter loyal to the Haftar-allied, eastern government

in Libya.

Since disputed elections and an escalation of fighting in 2014 there have been two governments in Libya, the UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) based in Tripoli and a rival government in the east.

The attack on the military camp on Traghen's outskirts was thwarted by mid-day, the spokesman, Khalid Chataoui, said, noting that hospitals in the city are underequipped to treat the injured.

There was no comment from Haftar's Libya National Army (LNA) on the attack.

The east-west division has split key institutions and produced a deadlock between the rump parliaments aligned with rival, shifting military factions.

On Tuesday, three suicide bombers attacked Libya's Foreign Ministry building in Tripoli.

Apart from the attackers, three people were killed and at least 21 injured in the attack, according to the Health Ministry.

Foreign Minister Mohamed Taher Siala said security arrangements agreed between GNA and the UN after a month of clashes in the south of Tripoli are yet to be implemented.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Libya](#)

Libya's chaos continues to feed extremist threatSaudi Arabia condemns terrorist attacks in Libya, Afghanistan and Iraq