

WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

Seoul: North Korea's fifth nuke test 'fanatic recklessness'

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea said it conducted a "higher level" nuclear test explosion on Friday that will allow it to finally build "at will" an array of stronger, smaller and lighter nuclear weapons. It was the North's fifth atomic test and the second in eight months.

South Korea's president called the detonation, which Seoul estimated was the North's biggest-ever in explosive yield, an act of "fanatic recklessness." Japan called North Korea an "outlaw nation."

North Korea's boast of a technologically game-changing nuclear test defied both tough international sanctions and long-standing diplomatic pressure to curb its nuclear ambitions. It will raise serious worries in many world capitals that North Korea has moved another step closer to its goal of a nuclear-armed missile that could one day strike the U.S. mainland.

Seoul vowed to boost psychological warfare efforts by increasing the number of propaganda loudspeakers along the rivals' border, the world's most heavily armed, and the number of hours of anti-North Korea broadcasts.

Hours after South Korea noted unusual seismic activity near North Korea's northeastern nuclear test site, the North said in its state-run media that a test had "finally examined and confirmed the structure and specific features of movement of (a) nuclear warhead that has been standardized to be able to be mounted on strategic ballistic rockets."

House conservatives serve notice to Ryan and Clinton

WASHINGTON — House conservatives have wasted no time since returning from their summer recess showing just how tough they can make life for Speaker Paul Ryan — and for Democrat Hillary Clinton if she becomes president.

Conservatives look determined to force a vote in coming days to impeach the head of the IRS despite deep misgivings among other Republicans about such a pre-election move.

They're pressuring Ryan to oppose a deal taking shape in the Senate on must-pass legislation to keep the government open.

And they're promising to keep investigating Clinton's email issues even if she ends up in the White House. Some conservatives are even saying openly that impeachment hearings should be an option against Clinton.

"There probably ought to be," said Rep. Mo Brooks, R-Ala.

Trump supporters court Jewish settlers in the West Bank

JERUSALEM — Republican activists are trying to "make America great again" — from inside a Jewish settlement deep in the West Bank.

This week, supporters of Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump have set up a campaign office in the Karnei Shomron settlement in the northern West Bank, hoping to tap into the large numbers of American immigrants in the area for support.

The office is in addition to several Republican outposts set up across Israel to get American expatriates to register to vote. A new location in Gush Etzion, a bloc of settlements near Jerusalem, is expected to open next week. It's believed to be the first time either Republican or the Democrat activists have placed a campaign office in the West Bank.

Marc Zell, co-chair of Republicans Overseas Israel, said the get-out-the-vote effort is not just for show.

His group estimates there are about 300,000 American citizens living in Israel, including some 50,000 West Bank settlers. Zell hopes as many as 200,000 of them will register to vote. With the vast majority believed to be Republicans, he said there could be enough votes to influence results in swing states like Ohio, Pennsylvania or Florida.

As hajj nears, questions about deadly 2015 stampede remain

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Marching with thousands of other pilgrims at last year's hajj in Saudi Arabia, 23-year-old Sobia Noor of Pakistan felt the crowd get tighter and the air grow thicker in the scorching heat. Suddenly, there was shouting and crying along the narrow street bordered by tall metal barriers.

She was holding hands tightly with her mother and aunt, but her grip was broken as a push of people struck her like a giant wave. She lost sight of her father. Thrown to the ground with others on top of her, she couldn't breathe.

The next thing she remembers was being sprinkled with water and pulled from the pile. Then she saw a scene that still haunts her: "There were heaps of bodies all around, and some injured were crying for help," she said.

The stampede and crush on Sept. 24, 2015, along Road 204 in Mina, a pilgrimage route on the outskirts of Mecca, killed at least 2,400 people — a disaster that the kingdom has yet to fully acknowledge or explain.

9/11: 'We can't act like racism hasn't been a part of all this'

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amid economic concerns, a Gallup poll around then found only 43 percent of Americans were satisfied with how things were going.

Then, in under two hours on Sept. 11, the nation lost nearly 3,000 people, two of its tallest buildings and its sense of impregnability. But out of the shock, fear and sorrow rose a feeling of regaining some things, too — a shared identity, a heartfelt commitment to the nation indivisible.

Stores ran out of flags. Americans from coast to coast cupped candle flames and prayed at vigils, gave blood and billions of dollars, cheered firefighters and police. Military recruits cited the attacks as they signed up.

Congress scrubbed partisanship to pass a \$40 billion anti-terrorism and victim aid measure three days after the attacks, and approval ratings for lawmakers and the president sped to historic highs. A special postage stamp declared "United We Stand," and Americans agreed: A Newsweek poll found 79 percent felt 9/11 would make the country stronger and more unified.

"I really saw people stand up for America. ... And I was very proud of that," recalls Maria Medrano-Nehls, a retired state library agency worker in Lincoln, Nebraska. Her foster daughter and niece, Army National Guard Master Sgt. Linda Tarango-Griess, was killed by a roadside bomb in Iraq in 2004.

Now, Medrano-Nehls thinks weariness from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and combative politics have pried Americans apart, and it pains her to think of the military serving a country so torn.

Larry Brook can still picture the crowd at a post-9/11 interfaith vigil at an amphitheater in Pelham, Alabama. The numbers seemed a tangible measure of an urge to come together.



AP Photo/Brennan Linsley

Imam Abdur-Rahim Ali, with the Northeast Denver Islamic Center, gives a sermon before Friday prayers in Denver on Aug 19.

Now? "I don't think we're anywhere close," says Brook, who publishes Southern Jewish Life magazine. To him, political partisanship and clashes over Middle East policy are walling off middle ground.

Three days after 9/11, Joseph Esposito was at smoldering ground zero as Republican President George W. Bush grabbed a bullhorn and vowed the attackers "will hear all of us soon." The moment became an emblem of American strength and resolve, and Esposito, then the New York Police Department's top uniformed officer, was struck by "the camaraderie, the unity" of those days.

He remembers the support police enjoyed then, and how much the tone had changed by the time of the Occupy Wall Street protests in 2011, when police arrested hundreds of demonstrators, many of whom said cops unjustly rounded and roughed them up. Now the city's emergency management commissioner, Esposito has watched from the sidelines as a national protest movement has erupted in recent years from police killings of unarmed black men, and as police themselves have been killed by gunmen claiming vengeance.

These days, Esposito hopes his job can be unifying. He wants people to feel

that the city helps neighborhoods equally to handle disaster. "The 1 percenters should not be better prepared than the 99 percent," he says.

"If everyone feels they're getting their fair share," he adds, "it fosters better feelings toward one another."

Retribution

For all the signs of kinship after Sept. 11, the first retribution attack came just four days later, authorities said.

Balbir Singh Sodhi was shot dead while placing flowers on a memorial at his Mesa, Arizona, gas station. Prosecutors said the gunman mistook Sodhi, an Indian Sikh immigrant, for an Arab Muslim.

Seeing hundreds of people gather in solidarity on the night of his brother's death showed me "the greatness of unity," says Rana Singh Sodhi, of Gilbert, Arizona. But in the last two years, he's felt a "change toward hatred again." He worries politicians are stirring animosity toward immigrants and minorities.

So does Imam Abdur-Rahim Ali.

After 9/11, he invited first responders for tea and coffee at the Northeast Denver Islamic Center to show appreciation and emphasize that Muslims "are regular Americans." Now,

Ali, who is African-American, believes Muslims and people of color are being demonized with "incendiary and divisive" remarks.

"We can't act like racism hasn't been a part of all this," he says.

Getting it back

Can the United States feel united again?

Some Americans fear it will take another catastrophe, if even that can shift the climate. Others are looking to political leaders to set a more collaborative tone, or to Americans themselves to make an effort to understand and respect one another.

When Sonia Shah thinks about the push and pull of American unity since the attacks that killed her father, Jayesh, at the World Trade Center, she pictures a rock hitting a pond.

The innermost ripple, that's the tight circle of support that came together around the people most directly affected by tragedy. Outside it, bigger and more diffuse, are bands of debate over policies and politics in the wake of 9/11.

"We usually see the outer rings of the arguments," says the Baylor University senior. "But I think there always is a current of unity that goes underneath things."



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THESE TWO HOMES?

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