

Trump lawyer calls for inquiry on Mueller probe

AFP | Washington

Donald Trump's personal lawyer yesterday called for an investigation into special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia probe, claiming it was tainted from the outset under former FBI director James Comey.

"We want the Mueller probe to be investigated the way the Trump administration has been investigated," Rudy Giuliani said on CNN's "State of the Union."

Giuliani's comments were the latest in a barrage of attacks on the probe by the president and his lawyers as Mueller appears to be nearing a conclusion to his investigation.

Suspect dead, 20 hurt in shooting at US arts festival

AFP | New York, United States

At least 20 people were hurt early yesterday in a shooting at an all-night arts festival in Trenton, the state capital of New Jersey, that also left one suspect dead, a local prosecutor said. "Multiple individuals opened fire" inside the festival venue shortly before 3:00 am, Mercer County chief prosecutor Angelo Onofri told reporters.

A 33-year-old man, one of the suspects, was killed, and another was taken into custody, he said.

Guatemala volcano search called off

AFP | Guatemala City

Authorities yesterday called off a search for the nearly 200 people missing since Guatemala's Fuego volcano erupted earlier this month, devastating the surrounding countryside.

Officials have confirmed the deaths of 110 people as a result of the volcanic eruption on June 3, but another 197 people remain unaccounted for. A spokesman for the government's civil protection agency, David de Leon, said the agencies involved decided to end the search "due to the fact that the area is uninhabitable and of high risk."

Aquarius migrants step ashore in Spain

AFP | Valencia, Spain

The 630 migrants whose rescue sparked a major migration row in Europe arrived in the Spanish port of Valencia yesterday after a turbulent week that saw Italy and Malta turn them away. The Aquarius sailed into Valencia harbour about 0830 GMT with 106 migrants on board to applause from police, health workers and translators waiting on the pier.

31 killed in bomb blasts in Nigeria

Two blasts ripped through the town of Damboa in Borno



The attack is the latest example of Boko Haram's continued threat to Nigeria

AFP | Kano, Nigeria

Suspected Boko Haram jihadists killed at least 31 people in a twin suicide bomb attack on a town in northeast Nigeria, a local official and a militia leader said yesterday.

Two blasts ripped through the town of Damboa in Borno state on Saturday evening targeting people returning from celebrating the Eid al-Fitr holiday, in an attack bearing all the hallmarks of Boko Haram.

Following the suicide bombings, the jihadists fired rocket-propelled grenades into the crowds that had gathered at the scene of the attacks, driving the number of casualties higher.

"There were two suicide attacks and rocket-propelled grenade explosions in Damboa last night which killed 31 people and left several others injured,"

said local militia leader Babakura Kolo.

Two suicide bombers detonated their explosives in Shuwari and nearby Abachari neighbourhoods in the town around 10:45 pm (2145GMT), killing six residents, said Kolo, speaking from the state capital Maiduguri, which is 88 kilometres (55 miles) from the town.

"No one needs to be told this is the work of Boko Haram," Kolo said.

A local government official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, confirmed the death toll.

"The latest death toll is now 31 but it may increase because many among the injured may not survive," said the official.

"Most of the casualties were from the rocket projectiles fired from outside the town minutes

after two suicide bombers attacked," he said.

The attack is the latest example of Boko Haram's continued threat to Nigeria and the Lake Chad region, said Ryan Cummings, Africa analyst at the Signal Risk consultancy in South Africa.

"Boko Haram still maintains both the intent and operational capacity to launch mass casualty attacks in parts of northeastern Nigeria," Cummings said, despite the government's repeated claims that the group is on the back foot.

The use of the rockets is "particularly conspicuous," Cummings said, as it "indicates that the sect continues to have access to military-grade weaponry." "The Boko Haram insurgency is not showing any immediate signs of" easing, said Cummings.

Miniature railway to reopen



A council has terminated its contract with the operators of a miniature railway after a mass walkout by volunteer staff brought the service to a standstill

Dailymail | Dorset

A council has terminated its contract with the operators of a miniature railway after a mass walkout by volunteer staff brought the service to a standstill.

The Poole Park miniature railway in Dorset was ground to a halt in April when more than 40 members of unpaid staff resigned after a row with the attraction's management.

Now, nearly two months after staff initially walked out, Poole Council has terminated its deal

with the railway's operators.

The railway was run by the Friends of Poole Park, and its subsidiary, the Poole Park Railway Community Interest Company. The Friends of Poole Park was founded around 17 years ago and successfully managed the railway for most of that time.

According to volunteers problems began to arise after the current chairman, Michael Collins, took over in recent years.

Disagreements were common and the situation came to

a head on April 25 when more than 40 members of staff went on strike, bringing the railway to a shuddering halt.

At the time, the official line on the Friends of Poole Park Railway's website cited 'seasonal track maintenance' for the ongoing closure, which left hundreds of families disappointed.

Now the council say they had undertaken thorough process when awarding the firms the contract but added that safe operation of the railway was their prime concern.

Greece, Macedonia sign historic deal

AFP | Otesevo, Macedonia

Greece and Macedonia yesterday signed a historic preliminary agreement to rename the small Balkan nation the Republic of North Macedonia, ending a row that has poisoned relations between the two neighbours since 1991.

"This is a brave, historic and necessary step for our peoples," said Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras.

"We are here to heal the wounds of time, to open a path for peace, fraternisation and growth for our countries, the Balkans and Europe," he said.

"Our two countries should step out of the past and look to the future," said Macedonia Prime Minister Zoran Zaev.

"By signing the agreement... we have really moved mountains," he stressed.

But as the two countries' foreign ministers signed the deal Greek protesters clashed with riot police, who beat them back with tear gas near the small village of Pisoderi, 25 kilometres away from the ceremony. Six policemen and six protesters were injured, police said, as around 500 demon-



Macedonian Prime Minister Zoran Zaev

strators waving Greek flags tried to approach the signature ceremony.

The accord aims to start unravelling one of the world's longest diplomatic disputes, which began 27 years ago with Macedonia's declaration of independence but whose roots date back centuries.

"The time has come again to sing happy songs in the Balkans," Tsipras said.

Zaev and several of his ministers arrived by speedboat at the picturesque fishing village of Psarades under a sunny sky, on the southern bank of Lake Prespa, one of the natural boundaries between the two countries. Tsipras and Zaev embraced on the village dock and were treated to a standing ovation by gathered dignitaries. Nimetz, who turned 79 on Sunday, and was given a birthday cake, has been trying to broker a solution since 1994, first as a US envoy and subsequently on behalf of the United Nations.



We are here to heal the wounds of time, to open a path for peace, fraternisation and growth for our countries, the Balkans and Europe

GREEK PM ALEXIS TSIPRAS

Australian artist Parr emerges alive from burial



Mike Parr

Reuters | Hobart

bucket for sanitary use.

An Australian performance artist who was buried in a steel container under a busy road for 72 hours as part of a so-called dark arts festival was released from his self-imposed prison yesterday. Mike Parr, a 73-year-old performance artist whose creative endeavors typically explore physical limits, was entombed in the mini-shipping container late on Thursday and the road was revealed above him.

Oxygen was pumped into the container where Parr had access to water, reading and writing material, a heater and a distress button in case anything went wrong - but no food. He was equipped with a

The burial act was part of the Dark Mofu Festival on the island state of Tasmania. It was designed to highlight violence perpetrated by colonialists against Aboriginal communities, the festival said on its website.

Dark arts festivals showcase artwork and performances that often celebrate ancient rituals. The festival has attracted controversy for placing inverted red crosses across Hobart, Tasmania's capital, prompting some Christian groups to denounce the installations as satanic. Parr's previous performance art included wrapping himself up in fusewire, then setting it alight, and sewing up his face.