

world

Firefighters injured as blaze near Yosemite grows

Los Angeles, United States

A fire that claimed the life of one firefighter and injured two others near California's Yosemite national park has almost doubled in size in three days, authorities said Friday.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) said the so-called Ferguson fire had spread to an area of 22,892 acres (92.6 square kilometers), and is so far only 7 percent contained.

More than 2,700 people are tackling the blaze, which started a week ago in the Sierra Nevada forest. Currently, there is no prediction as to when it will be completely contained. Two firefighters were injured days after their colleague Braden Varney, 36, was killed while fighting the fire.

Astronaut plays duet from space

German astronaut Alexander Gerst

AP | Berlin

Kraftwerk fans are used to hearing otherworldly tunes, but the German electronic music pioneers took it to another level at a gig in Stuttgart. Video posted by the European Space Agency shows German astronaut Alexander Gerst "dropping in" for a live performance from the International Space Station. Using a tablet computer with a virtual synthesizer, Gerst played a duet of Kraftwerk's 1978 song "Spacelab" with the band Friday night to cheers from the audience.

Australian skull displayed in US museum buried in France

AP | Canberra

An Australian soldier's skull has been buried in a French war grave a century after it was taken for eventual display in a Philadelphia museum, Australia's government said yesterday.

Private Thomas Hurdis was wounded in Belgium on Sept. 26, 1917, and died a week later in a U.S. field hospital in France at the age of 26.

Gaza truce largely holds

Friday's flare-up is the latest on the frontier since March have seen at least 149 Palestinians killed



Palestinian brother (1st-R) of 27 years old Mohammed Badwan mourns during his funeral in Gaza City on July 21, 2018. Gaza's health ministry said on July 20 that a fourth man named as Mohammed Badwan was shot dead by Israeli forces that day during protests along the border.

● **Israel declined to confirm the truce**

● **The United Nations urged all sides to step "back"**

● **Soldier's death was the first linked to Gaza violence since 2014**

AFP | Gaza City, Palestinian Territories

A ceasefire announced by Hamas largely held yesterday after a wave of deadly air strikes across the Gaza Strip sparked by the death of an Israeli soldier shot near the border.

The soldier's death was the first linked to Gaza violence since a 2014 war and raised fears Israel's response could spiral into full-out war.

But Hamas's decision to accept a ceasefire and not further retaliate reduced those fears for now.

As has been the case with previous such truces, Israel did not confirm the deal announced by Gaza's rulers that went into effect around midnight Friday.

There was relative calm on Saturday except for one incident, with the Israeli army saying a tank struck a Hamas observation point east of Gaza City in retaliation for an attempted border infiltration in northern Gaza.

There were no reports of injuries in that strike and there was no major Israeli bombing campaign overnight or mortar fire from the Palestinian enclave toward Israel.

"With Egyptian and UN efforts, we reached (an agreement) to return to the previous state of calm between the (Israeli) occupation and the Palestinian factions," Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said in a

statement early Saturday.

A senior Hamas official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the deal involved "the cessation of all forms of military escalation" including Israeli air strikes and Hamas mortars and rockets.

The source said that balloons and kites attached with incendiary devices, which Palestinians have been floating over the border for months to spark fires inside Israel, were not included in the agreement.

Israeli politicians have been calling for a fierce response to the kites and balloons, which have caused damage amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Israel's army and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office declined to confirm a truce was reached. The soldier, shot dead along the border in southern Gaza, was the first to be killed in and around the Palestinian enclave since a 2014 war between Israel and Hamas.

Nine family members among 17 dead in 'duck boat' tragedy

A tourist duck boat is seen bobbing in rough water before capsizing in the severe thunderstorm that struck the area

● **Five of the dead were aged 15 or younger**

● **The accident occurred Thursday night in full view of witnesses**

AFP | Chicago, United States

Nine members of one family were among 17 people killed when an amphibious US tourist boat capsized during a sudden storm on a Missouri lake, a tragedy which raised renewed questions on Saturday about the safety of the craft known as "duck" boats.

The hybrid vessels, with wheels allowing them to drive on city roads but which can also travel on water, are popular with tourists in many cities.

The accident occurred Thursday night in full view of witnesses, at least one of whom captured video of the vessel bobbing in rough waters on Table Rock Lake near the city of Branson, a vacation destination popular for its theaters and country music.

"My heart is very heavy. Out of 11 of us there's only two that's surviving, that's me and my nephew" Tia Coleman, her voice breaking, told Fox59 from her hospital bed.

"I lost all of my children. I lost my husband. I lost my mother-in-law and my father-in-law," along with other relatives, she told the Indianapolis

TV station.

Coleman said the boat's captain had told passengers earlier in their trip that they "won't need" life jackets.

"He said it when we were in the water," she told Fox59. "When it was time to grab them, it was too late and I believe that a lot of people could have been spared."

She added that the water "didn't look ominous at the very first."

Coleman told CNN affiliate KOLR of her own near-death by drowning: "I was yelling, I was screaming, and finally I said, 'Lord, just let me die, let me die.' She eventually floated to the surface.

Early Saturday, the Stone County Sheriff's Office confirmed to AFP the identity of the 17 victims -- nine of whom had the name Coleman.

They ranged in age from one-year-old Arya Coleman to the oldest victim Ervin Coleman, 76.



Duck boats are amphibious vessels that travel on both land and water, and are popular among tourists in major cities

Girl 15-yr-old raped by brother jailed over abortion

● **Indonesia forbids abortion unless a woman's life is at risk**

AFP | Jakarta, Indonesia

A 15-year-old girl who was raped by her older brother has been jailed for six months for having an abortion, an Indonesian official said yesterday. The girl was sentenced Thurs-



An Indonesian woman takes part in a 2016 protest against child sexual abuse in Jakarta (Courtesy The Guardian)

day alongside her 17-year-old brother in a closed hearing at Muara Bulian District Court on the island of Sumatra, court spokesman Listyo Arif Budiman said. Her brother was sentenced to two years in jail for sexually assaulting a minor.

Indonesia law requires that an abortion must be performed by a registered professional no later than six weeks into a pregnancy.

The girl, who was raped by her brother eight times starting in September last year, had the

abortion about six months after becoming pregnant, Budiman said. She was helped by her mother who is facing separate charges.

Police arrested the siblings in June after a male foetus was discovered at a palm oil plantation near Pulau village in Jambi province.

Prosecutors had originally asked that the girl be jailed for one year and her brother for seven. They say they may still appeal the decision.