

Eight students arrested over 'suspected arson attack' at Kenyan girls' school

AFP | Nairobi

Kenyan police yesterday said eight students had been arrested over a suspected arson attack at a girls' school that killed 16 children and hospitalised 79 others.

The fire broke in the early hours of Thursday at Utumishi Girls Academy in Kenya's Nakuru County, about 120 kilometres (75 miles) north of the capital, Nairobi.

The upper floor of the two-storey building, which had 12 cubicles housing 135 bunk beds, was badly damaged, according to police.



Police and forensic investigators stand on the rooftop as they examine the location of impact (C) over a damaged apartment

NATO, EU outrage as drone hits Romania apartment block

Russian drone crashes into a residential building in Galati, wounding two people overnight

● Romania expels Russian diplomat

● F-16s scrambled during incident

● Alliance considers defensive measures

AFP | Galati

A drone hit an apartment building in NATO-member Romania early yesterday, wounding two people and drawing condemnation from the Atlantic alliance and the European Union, which blamed Russia and warned against further incursions.

Romania called the incident

-- the first crash into a residential building outside Ukraine since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022 -- a "serious and irresponsible escalation" by Moscow.

The drone smashed into an apartment building in the centre of the city of Galati, close to the border with Ukraine, sparking a fire and sending a 14-year-old boy and 53-year-old woman to hospital with injuries, officials said.

Drone incursions in Romania, which neighbours Ukraine, have been detected dozens of times since the start of the Russian offensive, but the crash marked the first time a residential building has been hit in the country.

Air defence response

"During the night of May 28-29, the Russian Federation re-

4 minutes was the window Romanian forces had to react before the drone crashed, according to military officials

sumed drone attacks on civilian and infrastructure targets in Ukraine, near the river border with Romania," the Romanian defence ministry said.

"One of these drones entered Romanian airspace, was tracked by radar as far as the southern part of the city of Galati, and crashed onto the roof of an apartment building, with the impact triggering a fire," it said.

Two F-16 fighter jets were scrambled after the drones were detected in Romanian airspace, the defence ministry said.

Romanian forces did not have enough time to shoot down the drone, a defence official said, adding there were "no realistic opportunities to engage it safely". "The time we had available -- four minutes -- was extremely short," General Gheorghe Maxim from the Joint Forces Command told a press conference.

Romanian President Nicușor Dan said the decision not to engage was made "because the conditions necessary to destroy it without significantly endangering the safety of the civilian population were not present".

Diplomatic fallout

Romania summoned the Rus-

sian ambassador, and Dan convened a national defence council meeting to discuss "the most serious incident to have affected our national territory" since Russia invaded Ukraine.

Dan also said Romania would expel the Russian consul general in the Black Sea city of Constanta and close the mission, prompting Russia to say it was preparing "retaliatory measures".

A response to the move "will not be long in coming," Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told the state RIA news agency, describing the Western reaction to the drone crash as a "fuss". Romania's defence ministry meanwhile said that Bucharest had "requested measures to accelerate the transfer of anti-drone capabilities to Romania".

Poland leaders alarmed over Zelensky move on WWII unit

AFP | Warsaw

Polish leaders yesterday warned that the Ukrainian president's move to honor a controversial World War II group accused of mass-murdering Poles risked souring relations between the two neighbors.

The row was sparked after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky named a military unit after the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA).

Polish President Karol Nawrocki told the media yesterday he was "outraged" by the move and had proposed "the withdrawal of the Order of the White Eagle from President Zelensky".

Photo and video journalists in Gaza to receive 'Golden Pen' award

AFP | Paris

Professional photo and video journalists working in Gaza are to receive an annual press freedom award Monday for risking their lives to report on the war, an association of publishers has said.

The 2026 Golden Pen of Freedom will be handed to representatives of global news agencies still operating in Gaza - Agence France-Presse (AFP), The Associated Press and Reuters - "whose local journalists continue to provide consistent, professional coverage under extremely challenging conditions", said the World Association of News Publishers (WAN-IFRA).

Israel PM says forces pushing into Lebanon as delegations meet in US

AFP | Beirut

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday that his country's forces had pushed deeper inside Lebanon, even as Israeli and Lebanese military delegations were holding landmark security talks in Washington.

Israel also kept up its heavy bombardment of south Lebanon yesterday, with Lebanese President Joseph Aoun emphasising in a call with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio "the need to exert all efforts to reach a ceasefire" as an essential first step, his office said.

A ceasefire in Lebanon to halt



Destroyed buildings are pictured in the village of Odaiseh in southern Lebanon fighting between Israel and the Iran-backed Hezbollah group was supposed to have taken effect on April 17, but has never been observed. Both sides accuse each other

of violating it and justify their attacks by the other's alleged breaches.

Israel and Lebanon, officially at war for decades, began direct talks in April, with a fourth round expected next week in Washington following yesterday's meeting at the Pentagon.

A Lebanese military source told AFP the country's delegation would "emphasise the need for a ceasefire, and will present the army's plan for a state weapons monopoly and the extension of state authority across the country".

Hezbollah strongly opposes the talks and has refused to disarm.

'Very difficult'

This week, Israel said it would ramp up operations in Lebanon, including on the ground in the south.

"Our forces have crossed the Litani," Netanyahu said during a visit to troops near the border, referring to the river that runs around 30 kilometres (20 miles) north of the Lebanon-Israel frontier.

"They have moved up to the commanding terrain. We are operating in Beirut, in the Bekaa, across the entire front and are hitting Hezbollah head on," he added, in a video released by his office.