

SUBSCRIPTION

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THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

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GUNMEN KILL 16 AT YEMEN CARE HOME

FOUR FOREIGN NUNS AMONG THE DEAD



Min 17°
Max 30°



ADEN: Yemeni pro-government fighters inspect an elderly care home in this southern city after it was attacked by gunmen yesterday. — AFP

ADEN: Gunmen attacked a care home run by missionaries in Yemen's southern city of Aden yesterday, killing 16 workers including four foreign nuns, officials said. There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but Aden has seen a surge in attacks by the Islamic State group and rival Al-Qaeda. Four gunmen entered the refuge operated by Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity in Aden's Sheikh Othman district, killing a guard before tying up and shooting employees, security officials told AFP.

Screams of elderly residents echoed from the home during the shooting rampage, witnesses said. They recounted seeing the bodies of slain workers with their arms tied behind their backs scattered on the blood-stained floor as the aged residents cried out in fear. Apart from the four foreign nuns, the rest of those killed were Yemenis working at the facility, officials said.

Sunita Kumar, a spokeswoman for the Missionaries of Charity in the Indian city of Kolkata, said the members of the charity were "absolutely stunned" at the killing. "The sisters were to come back but they opted to stay on to serve people" in Yemen, she added. She also said that two of the killed nuns were from Rwanda and the other two were from India and Kenya.

The official sabaNews.net website cited another security source as saying that the victims were nurses, guards, cooks and other employees. They include

Yemenis, Indians and Ethiopians, the source said, adding that seven women were among those killed. The source said the assailants opened fire separately at every victim they tied up in different parts of the building. "We have never witnessed such a brutal crime," he said, adding that the killing spree lasted one hour. "I went out for Friday prayers. When I came back, I found all my friends dead," one of the residents said.

Yemeni Prime Minister Khalid Bahah said in a statement that security forces were hunting down the "terrorists" who carried out the attack. One official said the attackers were "extremists" and blamed the Islamic State group, which has been gaining ground in Aden in recent months.

It is not the first deadly attack on the Mother Teresa order in Yemen. In 1998, three of its nuns were shot dead in western Yemen by a psychiatric patient who had volunteered to fight alongside Bosnian Muslims in 1992 before returning to the Arabian Peninsula country. Once a cosmopolitan city home to thriving Hindu and Christian communities, Aden has gone from one of the world's busiest ports as a key hub of the British Empire to a largely lawless backwater. Aden's small Christian population left long ago. Unknown assailants have previously vandalized a Christian cemetery, torched a church and last year blew up an abandoned Catholic church. — Agencies

KUWAIT REFINES OIL PRICING IN BATTLE FOR EUROPE CUSTOMERS

DUBAI/LONDON: OPEC member Kuwait has changed the way it prices oil for Europe, trading sources said, in a rare tactical move aimed at making its crude more competitive as the battle for customers between OPEC and non-OPEC rivals intensifies. The European market, long dominated by Russian oil supplies, has been neglected by major OPEC producers due to poor growth as they focused on expanding Asian markets.

But as Russia moved aggressively into Asian markets and with the growing global oil glut heating up the fight for customers, OPEC members such as Saudi Arabia and Iraq ramped up sales to Europe, taking on former Russian customers such as Poland and Sweden. Large sales from Iraq's Kurdistan into Europe have added to the competition over the past six months and now Kuwait - a usually little-noticed seller in Europe - is both increasing sales and making its crude more attractive.

"If we want to have a share in any market, we have to have competitive marketing. That's what we are doing ... we have a legitimate market share that we try to protect and develop," a senior trading source familiar with the

development said. Trading sources said that from late last year the state-run Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) began pricing its European exports against the dated Brent benchmark after years of following OPEC's heavyweight Saudi Arabia in pricing its oil against the Brent Weighted Average (BWAWE).

BWAWE is also used by Iran while Iraq is using dated Brent. Over the past year, because of the way they are calculated, barrels priced off dated Brent have on average been cheaper than those priced against BWAWE. "All you have to do is just to look at who the customers like from the point of view of pricing. It is pretty obvious that over the past year, they gravitated towards Iraqi and very cheap Kurdish oil," a second trading source said.

While changing its pricing policy, KPC also started trading more barrels on a spot basis in Europe, following the sale of its Rotterdam refinery to trading house Gunvor. Last month, a senior KPC official said Kuwait planned to boost output this year and sign new export deals with European customers despite "fierce competition". — Reuters

MAN TORTURES WIFE TO DEATH

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A citizen was arrested yesterday in Jahra on charges of torturing his wife to death. The man had imprisoned her for three days, during which he beat and tortured her, which led to her death, according to preliminary investigations. A report from the Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Media Department referred to the suspect as A. N., a 43-year-old Kuwaiti, and the victim as D. T., also a Kuwaiti aged 33. It indicated that the man initially made an emergency call reporting that his wife died, then turned himself in to local police. The victim's body was taken to the Criminal Evidence General Department to determine the cause of death. Meanwhile, the suspect was jailed pending further legal procedures.