

# No scope for Gaddafi to remain in Libya

Says rebel chief

AFP, Benghazi

The head of Libya's rebel council said yesterday that there is now no possibility of Moamer Gaddafi being granted internal exile in Libya, following an International Criminal Court warrant for his arrest.

In a statement, Mustafa Mohammed Abdel Jalil, chairman of the National Transitional Council, said: "There is absolutely no current or future possibility for Gaddafi to remain in Libya."

Jalil confirmed that such an offer had been made but said it was now null and void.

"There is no escape clause for Gaddafi -- he must be removed from power and face justice."

Meanwhile, Libya's rebel council said that it would honour oil contracts inked under Gaddafi's regime, at least during the country's transition to democracy.

"During its time as the temporary govern-



Mohammed Abdel Jalil

ment, the NTC will continue to honour all finance and oil contracts made during the Gaddafi regime," the National Transitional Council said in a statement.

A range of foreign companies from Italy's ENI to Norway's Statoil have operations in Libya along with the Libyan state-run giant the National Oil Company.

As news surfaced of the prospect of the NTC allowing Gaddafi to stay in Libya, there was anger on the streets of the rebel capital of Benghazi on Sunday.

Around 100 people gathered in front of a hotel where a top NTC member was giving a press conference, a rare show of opposition against the council, which has steered the east of the country since Gaddafi's troops were pushed out four months ago.

While all senior members of the NTC insist that Gaddafi must leave power, there is less unity about whether or not there should be talks to give the veteran ruler a way out.



Yingluck Shinawatra (C), who is set to become the kingdom's first female prime minister, raises her hand during a press conference after meeting with possible coalition partners in Bangkok yesterday.

# Syrian forces kill 2, aim to retake Hama

AFP, Damascus

Syrian security forces killed two anti-regime protesters near Damascus and deployed tanks in a town near Turkey's border, activists said yesterday, as the authorities eyed the recapture of Hama.

More than 20 people were arrested on the outskirts of the flashpoint central city the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said, adding that angry residents countered by burning tyres and hurling stones.

One resident told AFP that a 12-year-old child, Omar Khallaf, was shot dead in northwest Hama and between 20 and 25 other people were wounded, two of them seriously, during the sweep.

Agents in their cars "shot in the air to terrorise residents," he said, while warplanes overflew the city, emitting sonic booms.

## NEWS IN brief

### Chavez arrives in Venezuela

REUTERS, Caracas

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez arrived yesterday at Maiquetia airport outside Caracas where he was greeted by government ministers upon his return from receiving cancer treatment in Havana, Venezuelan state television video showed.

Chavez may make a homecoming appearance on the balcony of his presidential palace this afternoon, television reported.

The 56-year-old socialist returned in the early hours of yesterday just one day before Venezuela marks the 200th anniversary of Venezuela's independence from Spain.

"We are delighted the president is home," said Vice President Elias Jaua.

### Thai Red Shirts urge govt to probe deadly unrest

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's "Red Shirt" opposition protest movement yesterday urged their triumphant political allies to "find the truth" behind last year's bloody military crackdown on their mass rally.

Nattawut Saikuar, one of the Red Shirt leaders, said that now the opposition Puea Thai party had clinched the vote, attention should focus on bringing to justice those responsible for violence that left more than 90 people dead.

"During the election campaign, political parties have to present their policies to people, but once they become the government, it's the government's job to find the truth," he told reporters in Bangkok.

### S Korean Marine kills four in shooting spree

REUTERS, Seoul

A South Korean marine went on a shooting spree yesterday at a base near the tense maritime border with North Korea, killing four fellow soldiers before trying to blow himself up with a hand grenade, the military said.

The incident was not related to the ongoing inter-Korean conflict which has simmered since 1953 when the Korean War ended in a truce, not a peace treaty.

A fifth soldier was injured in the attack. "After firing his K-2 rifle inside the marines' living quarters, a hand grenade was detonated in a separate building compartment outside," marine's spokesman Colonel Kim Tae-Eun told a press briefing.

"No one else was present in the compartment aside from the shooter Corporal Kim," he said.

### WAR CRIMES TRIAL

# Mladic refuses to plea before UN court

AFP, The Hague

Former Bosnian Serb military chief Ratko Mladic yesterday refused to enter a plea before a UN war crimes court and the judge ordered his removal from the courtroom for disruptive behaviour.

Security guards removed the 69-year-old after court president Judge Alphons Orie lost patience with his constant interruptions. As he was being taken from the courtroom, an angry Mladic shouted at the three judges, telling them they were not "allowing me to breathe".

Mladic is accused of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes stemming from the 1992-95 Bosnian war.

Dressed in the same grey suit as for his first appearance before the court last month, Mladic repeatedly interrupted Judge Orie, first complaining about not being able to



hear the proceedings and then about being cold.

He asked Judge Orie whether he could replace his sky-blue cap, but the judge refused, warning the former general not to communicate with the public gallery and focus his attention on proceedings.

"Mr Mladic if you continue speaking to the public, measures will be taken," Judge Orie warned.

But Mladic persisted and the judge's patience finally ran out.

"Mr Orie, you can do what you whatever you want, without (my lawyers), there's no need for me to receive anything or say anything, you can do whatever you want," Mladic angrily told the court before he was led back to his cell.

The hearing resumed a few minutes later with an empty dock.

### Saboteurs bomb Egypt gas pipeline

AFP, Cairo

Saboteurs bombed an Egyptian gas pipeline in the Sinai peninsula yesterday, sending flames shooting into the sky and cutting supplies to Israel and Jordan, a security official said.

Officials said a car had parked near the pipeline in the Bir al-Abd area, 80 kilometres (about 50 miles) from the northern Sinai town of El-Arish, shortly before the explosion.

They said the bomb was activated remotely.

Emergency services were deployed to the area to try to bring the fire under control, an official said.

Witnesses said the flames reached as high as 10 metres (32 feet). There were no immediate reports of casualties.

It was the third attack on the gas pipeline since February.

### Pak military supports radical groups

# Says NY Times report

AFP, Washington

The Pakistani military continues to support a variety of militant groups as part of a strategy of using proxies against its neighbours and US forces in Afghanistan, The New York Times reported yesterday.

Citing an unnamed former prominent militant commander, the newspaper said the man's group was supported by the Pakistani military for 15 years.

The commander said that militant groups, like Lashkar-e-Taiba, Harakat-ul-Mujahedeen and Hizbul Mujahedeen, are run by religious leaders, with the Pakistani military providing training, strategic planning and protection, the report said.

Pakistan has been assuring the United States that it has ceased supporting militant groups in its territory, and Washington has given Islamabad more than \$20 billion in aid over the past decade for its help with counterterrorism operations, the paper noted.

But the former commander said Pakistan's military and intelligence establishment has not abandoned its policy of supporting the militant groups as tools in Pakistan's dispute with India over the border territory of Kashmir and in Afghanistan to drive out US and NATO forces, The Times pointed out.

"There are two bodies running these affairs: mullahs and retired generals," the commander is quoted as saying.

### China road accident kills 23

AFP, Beijing

Twenty-three people were killed and nearly 30 others injured in central China yesterday when a long-distance bus flipped over and caught fire after being shunted by a truck, state media reported.

The accident occurred in the pre-dawn hours along an expressway in Hubei province, the Xinhua news agency said.

After being hit, the bus veered off the highway, flipped over and ended up in flames, it said, adding that the injured were taken to nearby hospitals for treatment. The truck also crashed through the guardrails and caught fire.

Police were investigating the cause of the accident.

### Fox News hacker tweets 'Obama dead'

BBC ONLINE

Hackers have taken over a Twitter account belonging to US broadcaster Fox News and declared President Obama dead.

The @foxnews politics feed stated: "BREAKING NEWS: @BarackObama assassinated, 2 gunshot wounds have proved too much."

More than two hours after the malicious postings appeared, they had still not been removed.

A group or individual, calling themselves The Script Kiddies appeared to claim responsibility.

Fox News Politics began posting bizarre messages around 07.00 BST on July 4.

The first read: "Just regained full access to our Twitter and email. Happy 4th."

The next posting stated: "@BarackObama has just passed. The President is dead."

Script Kiddies account The Script Kiddies account was quickly suspended.

Fox News Politics is one of the Twitter accounts associated with the industry-leading cable news network.

Its Twitter account carries the "verified" tick icon, indicating that the feed belongs to the organisation it claims to be.

In among the messages about President Obama, a couple of tweets appeared from a user called The Script Kiddies. However, that account was quickly suspended.

### Ben Ali sentenced to jail again over drugs, weapons charges

AFP, Tunis

A Tunis court yesterday sentenced ousted Tunisian president Zine el Abidine Ben Ali in his absence to 15 years in jail for possession of arms, drugs, and archaeological artefacts.

In his second trial since fleeing to Saudi Arabia following a popular uprising in January, Ben Ali was also given a fine of 54,000 euros (78,500 dollars).

The former strongman and his wife Leila Trabelsi had already been sentenced in

absentia to 35 years in prison last month for misappropriating public funds after large sums of cash and jewellery were discovered in a police search of their palace.

In yesterday's trial, Ben Ali alone was accused of harbouring drugs and weapons at his palace in the Carthage neighbourhood north of Tunis. He also faces a drug trafficking charge.

The court sentenced him to 10 years for drug possession, five years for weapons possession and six months for possession of archaeological artefacts.



PHOTO: AFP

Myanmar democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi (C) smiles upon her arrival at Nyaung Oo airport in Bagan, central Myanmar, on yesterday. Suu Kyi travels outside Yangon for the first time since her release, but politics will not be on the agenda, a party source said.

### Suu Kyi tests freedom with rare trip

AFP, Bagan

Democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi visited an ancient temple city in central Myanmar with her son yesterday, in a tentative first test of her freedom to travel following her release by the junta.

The Nobel Peace Prize winner, whose previously announced plan for a political tour prompted stern warnings from the regime, was greeted at Bagan airport by crowds of journalists and what appeared to be plain-clothes police.

It is the first time Suu Kyi has ventured outside the main city of Yangon where she lives since being freed from seven years of house arrest last November, but politics are not officially on the agenda.

Suu Kyi did not make any statements upon arrival and headed straight for her hotel with her youngest son Kim Aris, who told AFP he was "very happy" to be in Bagan, one of Myanmar's top tourist attractions.

"It's my first holiday in 13 years. She also needs a break. We're going to stay here for four days. I'm very happy," said the 33-year-old British national, who was reunited with his mother last year after a decade apart.

Suu Kyi's earlier plan to launch a political tour prompted a demand from the regime for her National League for Democracy (NLD) party to stay out of politics, and a warning that "chaos and riots" could ensue if she went ahead.

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