



## DALAI LAMA VISA ROW Tutu slams South Africa

AFP, Cape Town

Archbishop Desmond Tutu said Tuesday his government was worse than the apartheid regime for dithering over a visa for the Dalai Lama, who cancelled a trip to South Africa over the row.

Dalai Lama's office said the exiled Tibet spiritual leader had to quit the tour to South Africa to attend Tutu's 80th birthday as the authority showed no sign of issuing him visa.

In response, Tutu called a nationally televised news conference and lambasted President Jacob Zuma.

"I am warning you, one day we will start praying for the defeat of the ANC government. You are disgraceful."

## Palestinians near Unesco membership

REUTERS, Paris

Palestinians moved a step closer to full membership of the UN cultural agency yesterday when its board decided to let 193 member countries vote on admission this month.

The latest move in a Palestinian quest for statehood recognition drew a swift rebuke from US and Israeli envoys and a cool response from France.

In September, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas formally applied to the UN Security Council for full membership of the United Nations, ignoring a US warning that it would veto the move, as well as threats from members of the US Congress to restrict American aid to the Palestinians.

At the UN cultural agency Unesco, 40 representatives of the 58-member board voted in favor of putting the matter to a vote, with four -- the United States, Germany, Romania and Latvia -- voting against and 14 abstaining, a source at the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation told Reuters.

That set the scene for a membership vote at Unesco's General Conference, a meeting that runs from October 25 to November 10 and involves all 193 members of the agency, based in Paris.

Nimrod Barkan, Israel's ambassador to Unesco, said the move decision would harm the UN agency and not further the Palestinian desire for statehood.

"The problem is that the politicization of Unesco is detrimental to the ability of the organization to carry out its mandate," he told Reuters. "It is not too late to wake up and save this organization from politicization."

The Palestinians have had observer status at Unesco since 1974. In order to gain full membership, so-called "states" that are not members of the United Nations may be admitted to Unesco with a two-thirds majority of the General Conference.

An official at the Palestinian mission declined to comment.

To keep pressure on the United Nations, Abbas's Palestinian Authority has been looking at alternative institutions that may recognize their sought-after statehood status -- a campaign triggered by a breakdown of peace talks between the Palestinians and Israel last year.

On Tuesday, it won partnership status from the Council of Europe, European Union's main human rights body. The manoeuvring at Unesco has also angered US lawmakers.

Kay Granger, Chairwoman of the House State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, said US funding for Unesco could be cut if full membership was granted.

France, which has advocated observer status of the United Nations, said that UN subsidiary Unesco was not the place to further the Palestinian case for recognition.

## HORN OF AFRICA FAMINE

# Red Cross in major aid push in Somalia

BBC ONLINE

The International Red Cross began a huge distribution of aid to one million people in famine zones in Somalia controlled by Islamist militants yesterday.

A continuous operation will transport the food in lorries from the coast deep into areas controlled by al-Shabab.

The Red Cross says it is its biggest such operation anywhere in the world.

It followed difficult negotiations with al-Shabab, which banned many Western aid agencies from its territory two years ago.

The UN has declared a famine in six regions of Somalia - mostly in al-Shabab areas.

Tens of thousands of people have fled to seek food aid in the capital, Mogadishu, which is ruled by the weak interim government, or in camps in neighbouring Kenya and Ethiopia.

Last month, al-Shabab began moving people out of displacement camps, run by local charities in Islamist areas, and returning them to their villages.

The group said it wanted people to pre-

pare land ahead of the rainy season.

But no crops are expected to be ready for harvest until January and aid workers said a massive food distribution operation would be needed for months to come.

The Red Cross has worked in Somali for 20 years - and it said it used this track record to negotiate access with the Islamists.

Red Cross spokesman Geoff Loane told the BBC its operation was a three-month distribution, targeting vulnerable people like farmers and pastoralists.

The organisation will also provide seed to nearly a quarter of a million farmers, so that they can begin to recover from the region's worse drought in 60 years.

"If all goes well, hopefully these farmers will be able to harvest some crops by the end of the year," Mr Loane said.

The UN estimates that in September half of the four million Somalis in need received food aid. With the Red Cross reaching another million or more, it could mean that three-quarters of the victims of the famine and drought will be helped.

## Greece hit by new strike over austerity

BBC ONLINE

A 24-hour general strike is under way in Greece in protest at the nation's austerity measures.

Flights and ferry services have been cancelled, schools, government offices and tourist sites closed, and hospitals are working with reduced staff.

At least 16,000 people have joined protests organised by the main unions in central Athens.

The European Commission is discussing ways of propping up banks in Europe to protect them from the Greek crisis.

Meanwhile, in its latest report on the European economy, the International Monetary Fund has warned that economic growth is in danger of petering out and a global recession in the coming year cannot be ruled out.



Displaced residents from Sirte, fleeing clashes between pro-Gaddafi forces and anti-Gaddafi fighters, are seen at Ashreen Gate, 20 km east of Sirte on Tuesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

# Sirte residents turn anger on Libya's new rulers

REUTER, Sirte

Many residents of Sirte, Muammar Gaddafi's birth-place, blame Libya's new rulers and their Western allies for the death and destruction unleashed on their city by weeks of fighting.

Most are reluctant to talk openly about their allegiances, for fear they will be branded as members of a pro-Gaddafi fifth column. Yet their anger and bitterness is clear.

"This country has been built around one man. If he is over, Libya will be over," said a resident who gave his name as al-Fatouri, standing outside his home on the outskirts of Sirte.

"Gaddafi is like a picture frame. When part of the frame is hit, the whole picture will be destroyed, Libya will be destroyed," he said.

Sirte is the sternest test yet of the ability of the interim government, the National Transitional Council (NTC), to win over Gaddafi's tribe and prevent it from mounting an Iraq-style insur-

gency that would destabilize Libya and the region.

While most cities captured by NTC forces have rejoiced, or at least given that impression, Sirte is different because it is home to members of Gaddafi's tribe who genuinely back him.

"Let them look for Muammar, but do not kill 50,000 people to change the regime," said Fatouri. "It is not worth it that thousands die in Sirte for Muammar. This is what saddens us."

Fatouri said he, like thousands of other people from this city on the Mediterranean coast, had fled his home days ago because of the fighting. He decided later to come back.

"We refuse to leave, we don't want to suffer... We would rather die here than leave our houses and suffer," he said.

As he spoke, the sound of shelling and heavy machine guns reverberated around him and a crowd of locals gathered.

NTC forces say they are mounting a

final push to seize Sirte after pausing to let civilians leave. They say the only people left are mercenaries, die-hard fighters and, they believe, one of Gaddafi's sons, Mu'atsem, a military commander.

NTC fighters, whose offensive is backed by Nato air strikes, say they are treating fleeing residents well, giving them food and water, and detaining only suspected Gaddafi fighters.

Several residents said that was not the true picture.

"The rebels from Misrata say they will destroy Sirte because Misrata was destroyed," said Ali, another fleeing resident.

"Nato has brought destruction, and the revolution has brought destruction," he said.

As he spoke, bystanders began shouting at him that such talk would just spread "chaos and havoc." Ali retorted that they were not telling the truth and walked away in dismay.

## NEWS IN brief

### Haiti gets new prime minister

BBC ONLINE

The senate in Haiti yesterday appointed an aide to former US President Bill Clinton as prime minister.

Garry Conille was the third nomination put forward by President Michel Martelly, ending months of delay in forming a government.

His first two nominees were rejected by lawmakers in June and August.

Conille worked for Clinton in his role as a United

### Russia reveals arrest of Chinese spy

BBC ONLINE

A Chinese man faces a charge in Russia of attempted spying for allegedly trying to gain details of a missile system through bribery.

The man, identified as Tun Shenyun, was arrested in Moscow on 28 October last year while working as an interpreter. However, his arrest was kept secret from the media until now.

He allegedly sought technological and repair documentation on the Soviet-era S300 surface-to-air system.

There was no immediate reaction to the news from

### Hundreds of Nazi probes reopened

CNN ONLINE

Prosecutors have reopened hundreds of dormant investigations of former Nazi death camp guards and others who might now be charged under a new precedent set by the conviction of retired US autoworker John Demjanjuk. The Associated Press has learned.

Given the advanced age of all of the suspects the youngest are in their 80s the head of the German prosecutors' office dedicated to investigating Nazi war crimes told the AP that authorities are not even waiting until the Demjanjuk appeals process is over.

"We don't want to wait too long, so we've already begun our investigations," prosecutor Kurt Schrimm said.

He said the Demjanjuk conviction has opened the door to prosecutions that he had never thought possible in the past.



An Afghan boy leans against a wall as he cries on the outskirts of Kabul on Tuesday. Afghanistan is at the bottom of the Mothers' Index, compiled by the nonprofit group Save the Children, shows mothers and their children endure "grim conditions," with one in six kids dying before age five and one in three suffering from malnutrition.

PHOTO: AFP

## Afghan, Iraq wars not justified

Says a 3rd of US war veterans

AFP, Washington

A third of Americans who served in the military following the September 11 attacks do not believe the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were worth fighting, a poll found yesterday.

The Pew Research Poll found that 33 percent of post-9/11 US veterans said the two wars were not "worth it," given the costs and benefits to the United States, with a slightly larger percentage of 34 percent saying they were.

When the wars were taken individually, 50 percent said the Afghanistan war was worth fighting and 44 percent said the Iraq war was worth it.

In all cases, support for the wars was higher among the veterans than among the general US public, the Washington-based research center said.

The veterans, most of whom described themselves as more patriotic than other Americans, exhibited growing isolationism, with around 60 percent saying the United States should focus more on domestic problems than international ones.

Fifty-one percent of post-9/11 veterans said "over-reliance on military force creates hatred that breeds terrorism," while just four in 10 said "overwhelming military force is the best way to defeat terrorism," the poll found.

The research center cited a poll it had carried out in early 2011 that found that the general public divides in much the same way on the question.

## Somalia's Shebab vow more attacks

AFP, Mogadishu

Somalia's Shebab rebels vowed more attacks after a deadly car bomb killed more than 70 people in Mogadishu, spokesman Ali Mohamad Rage said in speech broadcast yesterday by the group's radio.

"We are promising that attacks against the enemy will be routine, more in number and will increase day by day," Rage said over radio Al-Andalus.

A suicide bomber on Tuesday detonated an explosives-laden truck at a government compound in Mogadishu, unleashing a powerful blast that mowed down dozens and wounded more than 100 others.

Witnesses said the devastation was the worst they had ever seen since Somalia plunged into a civil war two decades ago.

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10th

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১০ম জাতীয় ফার্নিচার মেলা ২০১১

6-11 October 2011, Bangabandhu International Conference Centre

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মেলো খোলা থাকবে সকাল ৯টা থেকে রাত ৯টা পর্যন্ত

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