

# Egypt marks uprising anniversary

## Army lifts emergency, releases prisoners

BBC ONLINE

Thousands of Egyptians held a rally in Cairo's Tahrir Square yesterday marking the first anniversary of the uprising, which toppled Hosni Mubarak.

Some celebrated the success of Islamist parties in the first post-Mubarak elections, while others were calling for further political reforms.

The decades-old state of emergency law had been partially lifted to mark the anniversary.

On Tuesday, Scaf chairman Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi said the state of emergency, which has been in place in Egypt almost continuously since 1967, was to be lifted.

But he said the law would still be applied in cases of "thuggery", without giving any details.

An end to the much-hated law had been a key demand of the protesters. During his nearly 30 years in power, Mubarak had repeatedly promised to lift the decree and then failed to do so.

Mubarak is on trial accused of ordering the killing of demonstrators though he denies the charges.

The military council also announced that more than 1,900 prisoners have been pardoned by Field Marshal Tantawi - they reportedly include prominent blogger Michael Nabil, who was jailed for insulting the armed forces.

On Tuesday night, several thousand people had gathered to camp out in Tahrir Square, the focus of last year's demonstrations.

The various groups are all competing to claim ownership of the revolution, says our correspondent, from the youth movement which began the protests a year ago to the Muslim Brotherhood, which now dominates parliament, and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (Scaf), which took power last February after President Mubarak stepped down.

Protesters who stayed in the square overnight put up tents and chanted slogans against the military council, which many say should stand down immediately.

"We are not here to celebrate. We are here to bring down military rule," said one protester.

But some people in the square said the protests should end and the new leaders be given time to move Egypt forward.



Egyptian protesters carry an obelisk with the names of those killed during last year's uprising, at a huge rally in Tahrir Square yesterday, marking the first anniversary of the uprising that toppled president Hosni Mubarak as a debate raged over whether the rally was a celebration or a second push for change.

PHOTO: AFP

## Faulty drugs kill 70 in Pakistan

BBC ONLINE

At least 70 people are believed to have died in the Pakistani city of Lahore over the past three weeks because of faulty heart drugs, officials said yesterday.

The number of dead has soared since Tuesday, when officials said about 36 people with cardiovascular problems had died since the start of the month. 400 others are being treated for similar symptoms.

The owners of three local drugs companies alleged to have supplied the contaminated drugs have been arrested.

Officials have warned that the batch of contaminated drugs might have been distributed to nearly 40,000 people since 15 December.

Drug samples have been sent to London and Paris for further investigation.

## FUEL PRICE HIKE Protests shut down Kathmandu

AP, Kathmandu

Students in Nepal have shut down the capital with a general strike to protest price increases for gasoline, diesel and cooking fuel.

The strike closed schools and markets in Kathmandu yesterday. The streets were quiet except for groups of protesters who chanted anti-government slogans. Police in riot gear stood watch but there were no reports of violence.

Students ordered the general strike after the government raised the prices of various fuels by an average of 10 percent last week. The government has said the increases are necessary because the state-run company that imports and distributes fuel is facing massive losses.

## Tensions ease between Pakistan PM and army

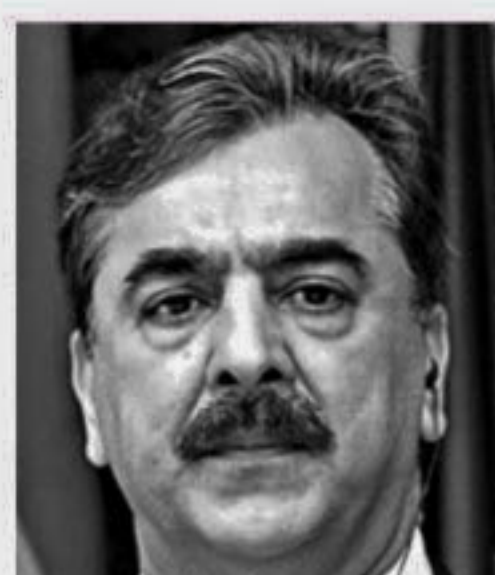
AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan's premier yesterday withdrew an accusation that the army chief acted unconstitutionally in a further sign that a damaging standoff between the government and the military is coming to a close.

Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani released the remarks following talks with army chief of staff General Ashfaq Kayani and intelligence chief Lieutenant General Ahmed Shuja Pasha.

Gilani's office said he was "dispelling" comments to a Chinese newspaper this month that accused Kayani and Pasha of subverting government channels in recommending an investigation into a scandal threatening the president.

At the time Gilani also sacked his defence secretary and the army warned of "potential grievous consequences for the country", feeding frenzied speculation that the government's days could be numbered.



Yousuf Raza Gilani

But state media quoted Gilani, who was flying to attend the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, as saying the remark was made "under a unique situation when... there was no clarity".

"But since (then) there is clarity and now we have all met, and that (remark) does not pertain to these two gentlemen," Gilani added.

The prime minister said the country "cannot work in an atmosphere of confrontation" among institutions.

"Therefore for the national interest we have to be seen on the same page," the official APP news agency quoted him as saying.

The remarks were seen as the latest attempt to calm tensions between his government and the powerful armed forces.

They come as the probe that the army recommended into a scandal implicating President Asif Ali Zardari appeared at risk of collapsing as investigators ruled out traveling to hear the testimony of the star witness.

## ISI chief met Musharraf in Dubai

DAWN ONLINE

Lt General Ahmed Shuja Pasha, the chief of the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), held a secret meeting with former President General (retired) Pervez Musharraf in Dubai advising him not to visit Pakistan, sources told DawnNews on Monday.

"General Pasha, who has remained very close to the former president, held a meeting with him (Musharraf) in Dubai and advised him not to return to the country as the situation is not conducive for his return," said an insider while requesting anonymity from this correspondent.

Sources said that it was a private meeting. Pakistan government says Musharraf will be arrested if he returns.

## Syria agrees to extend Arab League mission

### Russia stands firm beside Damascus

AFP, Damascus

Syria has agreed to extend a widely criticised Arab League observer mission for a second month, just hours after launching an angry tirade against the bloc's efforts to mediate in the crisis.

In a meeting yesterday with the mission's head, General Mohammed Ahmed Mustafa al-Dabi of Sudan, Muallem assured Syria's "full engagement" with the observers, SANA news agency reported.

The decision came after the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council withdrew its monitors and called on the UN Security Council to take "all needed measures" to press Syria to implement the Arab League decisions.

Meanwhile Russia yesterday said it would consider "constructive proposals" to end bloodshed in Syria but was opposed to force or sanctions.

"We are open to constructive proposals that go in line with the set task of ending

violence," Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in Moscow after meeting his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu.

Lavrov said any UN Security Council resolution backed by Russia "must firmly record that it cannot be used or interpreted to justify anyone's outside military intervention in the Syria crisis."

His comments came after Russian and US officials held talks in Moscow on how to stop the violence in Syria.

According to diplomats, European and Arab nations want a vote early next week on a resolution condemning the Syrian crackdown and hinting at sanctions against Assad's regime.

On the ground, meanwhile, activists said the Assad regime's security forces were pounding the central protest city of Hama for the second straight day.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said 9 people were killed yesterday. 33 civilians were killed by fire from the security forces nationwide on Tuesday.

## NEWS IN brief

### Megaupload founder denied bail

AFP, Auckland

Megaupload boss Kim Dotcom will stay behind bars awaiting possible extradition to the United States after a New Zealand judge yesterday said the Internet millionaire poses a serious flight risk.

Denying an application for bail, Auckland Judge David McNaughton said the German had the money and shady connections to slip out of New Zealand if he wished, following days of media revelations about his playboy lifestyle.

The founder of the file-sharing website Megaupload.com has been in detention since police raided his vast "Dotcom Mansion" in Auckland on Friday, spending his 38th birthday on Saturday in a remand centre, as part of a major US probe.

### 11 miners feared dead in Pakistan

AFP, Peshawar

At least 11 miners were feared dead after a landslide trapped them in a phosphate mine in northwest Pakistan yesterday, officials said.

The incident took place when miners were having lunch inside the mine in the mountainous Tarnawi area, some 45 kilometres northeast of the garrison city of Abbottabad, where US troops shot dead Osama bin Laden last May.

Officials said continuous rain was hampering rescue efforts.

### Thai opposition seeks removal of PM, FM

XINHUA, Bangkok

The main opposition Democrat Party on Tuesday filed a petition seeking the dismissal of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra and Foreign Minister Surapong Tovichakchaikul over the reissuing of a Thai passport for ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, Bangkok Post online reported.

Wirat Kallayasiri, a member of the Democrat Party's legal team, and Chaiwut Phongphaew, an MP for Songkhla, filed the petition on behalf of the party. They asked the senate speaker to forward it to the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) for consideration.

Wirat said the petition was signed by 145 MPs, more than the required 125. He said he believed it would take about 15 days for the Senate to verify the signatories' names.

## STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

# Obama stands tall on foreign policy

AFP, Washington

US President Barack Obama brandished the deaths of Osama bin Laden and Muammar Gaddafi as an election year show of foreign policy force aimed at disarming his Republican foes.

Trumpeting his commander-in-chief credentials in an annual State of the Union address on Tuesday, Obama made it clear that the traditional avenue of attack -- Democratic presidents are weak on defence -- would not hold in 2012.

"There are no Americans fighting in Iraq. For the first time in two decades Osama bin Laden is not a threat to this country," the president said in the speech, which effectively launched his reelection campaign.

"Most of al-Qaeda's top lieutenants have been defeated. The Taliban's momentum has been broken, and some troops in Afghanistan have begun to come home," he said.

But beyond the jingoistic military message was a clear challenge to Republican rivals not to come after him on foreign policy, a marker in the sand less than 10 months before the November 6 presidential

election.

Despite several clear foreign policy successes over the last three years, Republican presidential hopefuls have nonetheless sought to portray the Democratic incumbent as weak, continuing a tradition dating back to the Carter administration and the Iran hostage crisis.

In his State of the Union address, Obama insisted that a peaceful resolution was still possible in the high-stakes international showdown with Tehran but vowed he would "take no options off the table," referring to military action.

In an address focused heavily on domestic economic concerns, Obama also found time to hail the demise of Libya's Gaddafi and warned Syria's Bashar al-Assad that his regime's days were numbered.

"... in Syria, I have no doubt that the Assad regime will soon discover that the forces of change cannot be reversed, and that human dignity cannot be denied."

While noting it was unclear how events in the Middle East and North Africa would unfold, Obama said he would continue to "stand against violence and intimidation".

## Canadian FM meets leader of Ahmadiyya

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Canada's Foreign Minister John Baird MP on Tuesday visited the world head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad at the Fazl Mosque in London, said a press release.

During the meeting, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad highlighted the on-going repression against the Ahmadiyyas across the globe, most notably in Pakistan where the sect faces regular religious persecution.

Praising the Canadian initiative of setting up 'Office of Religious Freedom' to fight religious oppression, he condemned these violence and called for peace.

## Deadly landslide kills 60 in PNG

AFP, Port Moresby

As many as 60 people are feared dead after a massive landslide wiped out an entire village in a scene of "utter devastation" in Papua New Guinea, reports and aid workers said yesterday.

The disaster struck near a huge ExxonMobil liquefied natural gas project in the country's rugged Southern Highlands on Tuesday as people slept, leaving a trail of destruction.

PNG media said 40 bodies had been recovered and another 20 people were still missing.

The Pacific nation's Prime Minister Peter O'Neill also rushed to the site, near Tari, to offer support and see what help could be provided, an official in his office said Wednesday morning.

Nanduka Yandi, an aid worker for US-based NGO Population Services International, was at the scene of the landslide soon after it happened on Tuesday and said many people were killed, with few escaping the carnage.

"It was really huge. It covered 42 houses and only three or four people managed to escape. Everyone else died," he said. Describing a scene of "utter devastation" he said tonnes of mud and stones came down in the landslide and "destroyed the whole area."



Myanmar democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi, centre, smiles after she received the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto award from Pakistani president Asif Ali Zardari's daughter at her house in Yangon yesterday. Zardari arrived in Myanmar on January 24 for two days of talks and a meeting with veteran democracy advocate Aung San Suu Kyi.

PHOTO: AFP



## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Rangs Properties Limited needs to fill the following vacancies:

Position: Project Engineer

No of post required : 6(six)

**Qualification with experience:**

1. B.Sc. Engg. in Civil. Masters in any discipline of civil engineering will be given preference
2. Min. 3 years experience in building construction in any real estate / construction company.
3. Shall be having good knowledge both in structural & finishing works.

**Job responsibilities:**

1. Full time close supervision of construction works in accordance with design, drawing, specification & quality guide lines.
2. To ensure the progress of works as per schedule.
3. To ensure good workmanship at every stage of works.
4. To check & ensure the quality of material before use.
5. To control the wastage of materials
6. To measure the quantity of work executed
7. To prepare & follow daily activity plan.
8. To ensure safety at work place following safety guide line.

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