

EU agree
Greece debt
deal

AFP, Brussels

Greece won breathing space yesterday with long-frozen eurozone loans to restart from December and a first clear admission that a chunk of the country's debt burden will need to be written off down the line.

After 13 hours of talks in Brussels, the eurozone and the International Monetary Fund agreed to unlock 43.7 billion euros (\$56 billion) in loans and on the need to grant significant debt relief for decades to come.

Greece must still meet a series of agreed conditions but "the decision will certainly reduce the uncertainty and strengthen confidence in Europe and in Greece," said European Central Bank President Mario Draghi who left the talks before a final press conference.

Starved of bailout financing since the summer, Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras hailed the deal in Athens, while German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble said the package would be presented to German lawmakers by the end of the week.

Other member states will also have to obtain their parliament's approval for the deal.

Finance ministers, the IMF and the ECB said the money would be paid in four installments from December 13 through until the end of March, conditional on Greece funnelling income back to creditors at source and on the implementation by Athens of tax reforms settled with creditors.



PHOTO: AFP

Egyptian protesters shout political slogans against President Mohamed Morsi's decree granting himself broad powers during a demonstration in Cairo's Tahrir Square yesterday.

Morsi faces nationwide protests

AFP, Cairo

Egypt's President Mohamed Morsi faced nationwide protests yesterday after digging in his heels over a controversial decree granting him sweeping powers, in the most divisive crisis since he took power in June.

Brief clashes between police and protesting youths erupted early morning near Cairo's Tahrir Square, where activists who have been camping out were hoisting banners from lamp posts and erecting more tents ahead of a mass rally.

The planned demonstrations come a day after Morsi met with the country's top judges in a bid to defuse the crisis over the decree, that has sparked deadly clashes and prompted judges and journalists to call for strike.

Marches are planned in the afternoon from across Cairo into Tahrir -- the epicentre of protests that toppled Hosni Mubarak last year -- where the numbers are expected to swell after the end of the work day.

Demonstrations have also been

called in several Egyptian provinces including Alexandria on the Mediterranean, in the Nile Delta and in central Egypt.

The protesters are angry at the decree that Morsi announced last Thursday allowing him to "issue any decision or law that is final and not subject to appeal", which effectively placed him beyond judicial oversight.

The decree put him on a collision course with the judiciary and consolidated the long-divided opposition, which accuses him of taking on dictatorial powers.

"The Muslim Brotherhood stole the revolution" read one banner. Another said the president was "pushing the people to civil disobedience."

After a meeting on Monday with top judges aimed at defusing the dispute, Morsi stuck by his controversial decree.

There is "no change to the constitutional declaration," presidential spokesman Yasser Ali told reporters at the end of the meeting.

But he added that Morsi sought to

clarify that any irrevocable decisions apply only to issues related "to his sovereign powers" and stressed the temporary nature of the decree.

In a statement, the head of the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) -- the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood -- said the meeting between Morsi and the judges had been "fruitful."

But judges at the meeting said the crisis was not over.

"The meeting failed," Judge Abdel Rahman Bahlul, who attended the talks, told the independent daily Al-Masry Al-Youm.

"We cannot say this is the end of the crisis between the judiciary and the presidency," another judge who attended the talks, Judge Ahmed Abdel Rahman, told the paper.

A judicial source told AFP that even if immunity were limited to sovereign powers, "which appears to be a compromise, there are still concerns that the text itself remains unchanged."

Morsi's decree has led to charges that he is taking on dictatorial powers.

Taliban claim bid to kill Hamid Mir

AFP, Peshawar

Pakistan's umbrella Taliban faction yesterday claimed responsibility for planting a bomb under the car of a prominent journalist and TV anchor and threatened a second assassination bid.

Hamid Mir, who hosts prime-time show Capital Talk on Geo television and writes a column for the biggest-selling newspaper Jang, was criticised by the Taliban last month in the wake of the shooting of teenage activist Malala Yousafzai.

"Life and death is in the hands of Allah. Allah saved his life but we will make a similar attempt again," Tehreek-e-Taliban spokesman Ehsanullah Ehsan told AFP by telephone from an unknown location.

NEWS IN brief

Vietnam snubs new China passport

AFP, Hanoi

Vietnamese border guards yesterday said they were refusing to stamp entry visas into controversial new Chinese passports which feature a map of Beijing's claim to almost all of the South China Sea.

Vietnam has said the computer-chipped passports violate its sovereignty and has demanded Beijing withdraw the documents, which show the

N Korea missile test looming: Report

AFP, Seoul

North Korea could carry out a long-range missile test in the next three weeks, with new satellite images showing increased launch site activity, according to satellite operator DigitalGlobe Inc.

The global provider of commercial high-resolution earth imagery said Monday that the new pictures showed significant movement at North Korea's Sohae (West Sea) Satellite Launch Station.

Congo rebels to withdraw from Goma

AFP, Goma

Rebels in the Democratic Republic of Congo yesterday said they would withdraw from Goma, a week after their capture of the key eastern city sparked fears of a new war in the volatile region.

A senior rebel commander told AFP the M23 fighters would withdraw from the city "in order to start negotiations with the government" but he

4 more self immolations in China

AFP, Beijing

Four more Tibetans have set themselves alight in protest at China's rule, overseas media said yesterday, taking the total to more than 20 this month.

The spate of burnings in recent weeks began in the run-up to the Chinese Communist Party's set-piece congress, where Xi Jinping was named as the organisation's general secretary in a 10-

TOP GLOBAL THINKERS Malala ranked sixth

EXPRESS HERALD TRIBUNE

For standing up to the Taliban, and everything they represent made

Malala Yousafzai, the 15-year-old child activist from Swat Valley, shine on the number 6 spot of the Top 100 Global Thinkers list.

The list was released by Foreign Policy magazine on Monday. This year, Foreign Policy honoured people who spoke for freedom of speech, for making themselves heard.

Malala was shot in the head by the Taliban on October 9 for standing up for girls education.

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Female Mutilation: UN okays resolution

AFP, United Nations

The UN General Assembly on Monday passed its first resolution condemning female genital mutilation, which opponents say more than 140 million women worldwide have had to endure.

Though outlawed in most nations, the measure represents the first time the traditional practice in African and Middle East nations has been denounced at such a high level in the United Nations.

POLITICAL STANDOFF IN NEPAL Prachanda offers opposition top jobs to avert crisis

AFP, Kathmandu



interview.

The deal would provide hope of lasting consensus among Nepal's warring political factions, who have been ordered by the president to form a new unity government by tomorrow and end months of uncertainty in the impoverished country.

Dahal, better known by his civil war nom-de-guerre Prachanda, or "the fierce one", even entertained the possibility of one of the opposition groups leading a new government.

Nepal has been run by a caretaker Maoist-led government since the collapse in May of an interim assembly that had failed in its main task of drawing up the constitution following the 10-year insurgency that ended in 2006.

Is Prince Charles impatient to be king?

DAILY MAIL ONLINE



Is the man who would be king tired of waiting his turn?

Speculation reigned in Great Britain this weekend after Prince Charles spoke of his "impatience" at an event to promote his 64th birthday at Dumfries House, a once-stately residence that the royal has worked to rehabilitate and save for his country.

"Impatient? Me? What a thing to suggest! Yes, of course I am," joked the Prince who passed his great-great grandfather Edward VII as the longest-waiting heir in his nation's history. "I'll run out of time soon. I shall have snuffed it if I'm not careful."

His mother, Queen Elizabeth, has served her country for 60 years and remains in good health at 86. Her own mother lived in be 101 in a genetic predisposition for longevity that could see Prince Charles cooling his heels for years longer as his sons, Princes William and Harry, grab the spotlight.

Combat rages in capital as regime air strikes continue

REUTERS, Beirut

Syrian aircraft attacked towns in the country's north and east and killed at least five people in a strike on an olive oil press as fighting raged in the capital Damascus yesterday, opposition activists said.

Rebels battled government forces in the Damascus suburb of Kfar Souseh, on the edge of the centre of the capital housing the government of President Bashar al-Assad, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a British-based monitoring group.

There was also combat in the Baba Amr district of Homs city, an area that was overrun by government troops in February, said the Observatory, as well as fighting in Aleppo, Deir al-Zor, Deraa,

Idlib province and Hama province.

A government jet fired barrel bombs -- cylinders packed with explosives and petrol -- at the Abu Hilal olive oil press, 2 km west of Idlib city, activist Tareq Abdellaq said.

At least five people were killed and five wounded in the attack, the Observatory said. Abdellaq said at least 20 were killed and 50 wounded.

The victims were civilians, according to activists, who acknowledged rebel fighters were in the area.

An estimated 40,000 people have been killed in Syria since March last year when protests inspired by the Arab Spring broke out against Assad, whose family has ruled autocratically for four decades.

SYRIA CIVIL WAR

AP, United Nations

Palestinian diplomats on Monday released a draft resolution on a bid for UN recognition as the United States again warned that a successful vote this week could cost the Palestinians dearly in US aid cash.

Meanwhile, France yesterday said it would vote in favour of Palestinian non-member status at the United Nations, boosting Palestinian efforts to secure greater international recognition.

Frustrated that their bid for full UN membership last year was thwarted by US opposition in the UN Security Council, Palestinians have launched a watered-down bid for recognition as a non-member state, similar to the status the Vatican enjoys.

The proposal, which is due to be put to the vote in the General Assembly at the end of the week, would implicitly recognise Palestinian statehood. It could also grant access to bodies such as the International Criminal Court in The Hague, where the Palestinians could file complaints against Israel.

While the Palestinians are guaranteed of getting a majority in the 193 member UN General Assembly, the resolution is fiercely opposed by the United States and Israel and has also had a cold reaction from key European powers.

STATEHOOD BID AT UN Palestinians release draft, France supports move

AP, United Nations

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UNICEF Vacancy Announcement

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is seeking applications from Bangladeshi Nationals to fill the following position. For detailed Job Descriptions, please visit our website: www.unicef.org.bd

Administrative Assistant (Transport)

Level: GS-6

Last date of receiving applications: 10 December 2012

Applications with CV and a completed P-11 form should be sent to the Chief, Human Resources, UNICEF-Bangladesh, 1 Minto Road, Dhaka-1000. Only short-listed candidates will be called for written test/interview. Any attempt to unduly influence UNICEF's selection process will lead to automatic disqualification of the applicant.

UNICEF IS COMMITTED TO GENDER EQUALITY IN ITS MANDATE AND ITS STAFF. WELL QUALIFIED CANDIDATES, PARTICULARLY FEMALES ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY.

UNICEF is a non-smoking working environment

www.unicef.org.bd



AFP, Ramallah



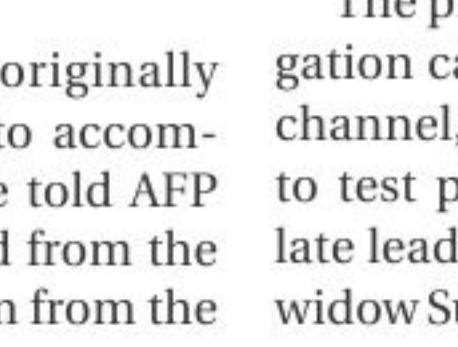
The remains of iconic Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat were exhumed yesterday, eight years after his death, with experts set to test for signs that he was poisoned.

The process was carried out in secrecy, with Arafat's grave carefully shielded from the public eye and media kept far away, but Palestinian sources confirmed samples had been taken from the remains on yesterday morning.

A Palestinian source said that only a Palestinian doctor had been allowed to directly touch the remains and remove the samples, but that the process was conducted in front of Swiss, Russian and French experts.

Palestinian officials had originally planned a military ceremony to accompany the reburial, but a source told AFP that the samples were collected from the remains without removing them from the

AP, Brussels



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AP, Brussels