

NEWS IN
briefNew US ambassador
arrives in Libya

AFP, Tripoli

The new US ambassador to Libya arrived in Tripoli on Wednesday, an embassy source said, nine months after her predecessor and three other Americans were killed in an Islamist attack in Benghazi.

Career diplomat Deborah Jones yesterday presented her credentials to the General National Congress, Libya's highest political and legislative authority, state news agency LANA said.

Jones succeeds Chris Stevens, a popular figure among the Libyan people, who was killed along with the other three when Islamists overran the Benghazi mission and a nearby CIA annex on September 13.

WikiLeaks assisting
Snowden

AFP, Washington

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange said Wednesday he had been in contact with representatives of Edward Snowden to discuss his possible bid for asylum in Iceland following his disclosure of US surveillance programs.

In a conference call with reporters, Assange said he had been in contact with representatives of Snowden, who has been based in Hong Kong since May 20, to discuss a potential attempt at securing asylum.

ICC postpones Kenya
president's trial

AFP, The Hague

The International Criminal Court yesterday postponed until November 12 Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta's crimes against humanity trial in connection with deadly post-election violence.

Kenyatta, 51, faces five counts of crimes against humanity including murder, rape and forcible transfer for his role in the unrest which ripped through Kenya after disputed election results in late 2007.

Some 1,100 people died in the bloodshed after allegations of vote rigging, shattering Kenya's image as a beacon of regional stability.

'China used military
against Uighur'

AFP, Tokyo

Exiled Uighur leader Rebiya Kadeer yesterday claimed the Chinese government used military force in the latest episode of what she calls "ethnic cleansing" in the troubled province of Xinjiang.

Twenty-one people, including police officers and officials, were killed in violent clashes in the ethnically divided region on April 23, officials have said.

Chinese state media has made no mention of any military involvement in the incident, with an earlier report saying gunfights had broken out after police tried to search the home of locals suspected of possessing illegal knives.

Iraqis vote in provincial polls

AFP, Baghdad

Iraqis in two Sunni-majority provinces voted under heavy security in delayed provincial polls yesterday as the country grapples with a surge in nationwide violence and months of angry protests.

The elections, postponed for two months in Anbar and Nineveh provinces due to security concerns, come amid a long-running political deadlock and are seen as a key gauge of politicians' popularity ahead of general elections next year.

Some 2.8 million voters in Anbar and Nineveh will choose between 1,185 candidates from 44 political parties jostling for 69 provincial council seats in all.



Myanmar demonstrators hold placards during a silent protest on 'World Refugee Day' in New Delhi yesterday. The protesters requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to expedite the resettlement program for Burmese refugees.

PHOTO: AFP

India sets up nationwide snooping programmes

REUTERS, New Delhi

India has launched a wide-ranging surveillance programme that will give its security agencies and even income tax officials the ability to tap directly into e-mails and phone calls without oversight by courts or parliament, several sources said.

The expanded surveillance in the world's most populous democracy, which the government says will help safeguard national security, has alarmed privacy advocates at a time when allegations of massive US digital snooping beyond American shores have set off a global furore.

The Central Monitoring System (CMS) was announced in 2011 but there has been no public debate and the government has said little about how it will work or how it will ensure that the system is not abused.

The government started to quietly roll the system out state by state in April this year, according to government officials. Eventually it will be able to target any of India's 900 million landline and mobile phone subscribers and 120 million Internet users.

Officials said making details of the project public would limit its effectiveness as a clandestine intelligence-gathering tool.

"Security of the country is very important. All countries have these surveillance programmes," said a senior telecommunications ministry official, defending the need for



a large-scale eavesdropping system like CMS.

"You can see terrorists getting caught, you see crimes being stopped. You need surveillance. This is to protect you and your country," said the official, who is directly involved in setting up the project.

The new system will allow the government to listen to and tape phone conversations, read e-mails and text messages, monitor posts on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn and track searches on Google of selected targets, according to interviews with two other officials involved in setting up the new surveillance programme, human rights activists and cyber experts.

In 2012, India sent in 4,750 requests to Google Inc (GOOG.O) for user data, the highest in the world after the United States.

Security agencies will no longer need to seek a court order for surveillance or depend, as they do now, on Internet or telephone service providers to give them the data, the government officials said.

Tibetan nun dies in self-immolation

AFP, Beijing

A Tibetan nun who last week set fire to herself in protest at Chinese rule has died, a US-based broadcaster and rights group said.

The woman set herself ablaze on June 11 near Nyitso monastery, the scene of similar protests, in Daofu county of southwest China's Sichuan province, Washington-based Radio Free Asia (RFA) reported on its website.

Wangchen Dolma, aged 31, died on Friday in hospital and was "secretly cremated", RFA said, citing the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) -- the India-based government-in-exile -- in confirming the death.

The US-based International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) rights group said she was "taken away by police" after setting herself ablaze during a "gathering of several thousand monks". The ICT on Thursday confirmed the death.

The opening of this office has made the Taliban look strong, the Americans desperate and President Karzai angry," the Afghanistan Analysts Network said in a briefing note.

Afghanistan 1400, a civil youth group, said the office should be used to hold Taliban leaders to account for their crimes.

With the US-led Nato combat mission due to end next year, US officials are determined to resume talks with the Taliban after tentative contacts limited to a prisoner swap collapsed last year.

AFGHAN PEACE PLANS

US tries to placate Karzai after rift

AFP, Kabul

Afghan President Hamid Karzai yesterday mulled his response to US efforts to repair damaged ties after a public spat over the Taliban opening an office in Qatar for peace talks.

Karzai and US Secretary of State John Kerry spoke twice by telephone after the Afghan government became enraged that the office was opened in a blaze of publicity and US officials were apparently about to arrive for talks.

The office used the formal name of "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan" from the rebels' 1996-2001 government, and a Taliban spokesman at the opening press conference declined to say they supported the peace process.

"John Kerry assured that the Qatari government has removed the 'Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan' sign from the Taliban office and the office is for peace talks only," a statement from Karzai's office said late Wednesday.

Karzai told Kerry that Afghan public opinion was "extremely negative" to the way in which the Taliban had been unveiled in an event that many experts described as an international publicity coup for the rebels.

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ODDLY enough

Obama's oops moment at G8

AFP, London

US President Barack Obama repeatedly called British finance minister George Osborne "Jeffrey" at the G8 summit, media reported yesterday.

The US president said three times that he agreed fully with "Jeffrey" during his presentation on G8 host Britain's plans to crack down on tax avoidance, leaving Osborne red-faced.

Realising his blunder

afterwards, Obama joked that he had mistaken Britain's chancellor for the US soul singer Jeffrey Osborne, The Sun and the Financial Times reported.

"I'm sorry, man. I must have confused you with my favourite R and B singer," Obama was quoted as saying.

The chancellor, 42, bears little resemblance to Jeffrey Osborne, a 65-year-old African-American hit singer-songwriter known for his 1982 classic "On the Wings of Love".

The Sun quoted an onlooker at the session as saying:

"Osborne looked really put out" by what was a "visually crushing blow".

"The first time Obama did it was bad enough, but then he kept on repeating the error throughout the presentation. It got really cringe-worthy by the end."



People fall in a stampede to see football superstar David Beckham at Tongji University in Shanghai yesterday. Beckham's visit to China turned "chaotic" after at least five people were hurt in a stampede as fans rushed to see him, local media and an AFP photographer at the scene said.

Rights group condemn Sri Lanka media code

AFP, Colombo

International rights groups yesterday condemned moves by Sri Lanka's government to introduce a code of ethics for journalists, saying it would further undermine press freedom.

Local journalists have already criticised the planned media code, which is set to be adopted shortly by lawmakers, as being too sweeping and now international advocacy groups have added their voice to the criticism.

"Sri Lankan journalists are already under enormous pressure not to be critical of the government, and the vagueness of this code will likely lead to greater self-censorship to avoid government retaliation," said Brad Adams, the Asia director of Human Rights Watch.

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists also criticised President Mahinda Rajapaksa's government for focusing on such a code at a time when it is preparing to host a Commonwealth summit in November.

The new code drawn up by the information ministry seeks to prohibit "material against the integrity of the Executive, Judiciary and Legislature".

It also warns against the publication of content that "offends against expectations of the public, morality of the country or tends to lower the standards of public taste and morality".

Information Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said that the new code would not be legally enforceable but instead "would only be a memorandum of understanding".

Pakistan battles measles epidemic

AFP, Lahore

In the intensive-care ward of Lahore's Mayo hospital, pale, spotty children cry in the intense heat of the Pakistani summer -- victims of a devastating measles outbreak.

Punjab, Pakistan's most populous province of which Lahore is the capital, has borne the brunt of the epidemic. It has 18,000 of the 25,000 cases reported around the country by provincial health authorities and more than 150 -- all children -- of the 495 deaths.

The province is the country's richest and most developed, but health experts say ineffective vaccination programmes and poor monitoring of the disease have led to the contagious disease running rampant.

Doctor Muhammad Younas, an official from the Directorate General of Health in Punjab, told AFP the province had seen 17,985 measles cases this year, with 158 deaths.

Last year there were 310 measles deaths in Pakistan, according to the World Health Organization, described in January by a health ministry official as "a record high".

Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif has declared a "war against measles" and the province hopes to have the outbreak under control within weeks, Ilyas said.

SME Product Display & Information Center

এসএমই প্রোডাক্ট ডিসপ্লে ও ইনফরমেশন সেন্টার

সম্পূর্ণ দেশীয় প্রযুক্তি/সাতের তৈরী

কঠিনীয় এবং রপ্তানীযোগ্য এসকল পণ্য

সুলভ মূল্যে সরাসরি উদ্যোক্তাদের

কাছ থেকে কেনা যাবে।

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