

NEWSIN brief

Egypt to cut curfew by 2 hours

AFP, Cairo

Egypt is to shorten a night-time curfew imposed on Cairo and 13 provinces starting Saturday, the cabinet said yesterday. The curfew will be from midnight to 5:00am (0300 GMT), except on Fridays when it will begin at 07:00pm (1700 GMT), according to a cabinet statement. The curfew was imposed last month as authorities launched a massive crackdown on supporters of ousted Islamist president Mohamed Morsi.

Two Saudis die of MERS virus

AFP, Riyadh

Two Saudis have died after contracting the MERS coronavirus, the health ministry said yesterday, bringing the total number of fatalities from the SARS-like virus in the kingdom to 49.

Saudi authorities have urged the elderly and chronically ill to avoid the hajj pilgrimage to Makkah this year and have cut back on the numbers of people they will allow to perform the pilgrimage.

15,000 flee volcano in Indonesia

AFP, Jakarta

More than 15,000 people have now fled their homes since Mount Sinabung in western Indonesia spectacularly erupted this week, an official said yesterday.

The volcano in North Sumatra province erupted for the first time in three years on Sunday, spewing rocks and red-hot ash onto nearby villages, and has been rumbling ever since.

Philippine troops kill 8 Muslim rebels

AFP, Zamboanga

Philippine security forces yesterday killed eight Muslim rebels as they hunted the remnants of a guerrilla force hiding in homes of a major city and believed to be holding hostages.

A soldier also died, the military reported, bringing the death toll from 11 days of fierce street battles in the southern port city of Zamboanga to at least 114.



US surveillance hurts web trust Says FB chief

AFP, Washington

Revelations about the US government's secret surveillance programs has had a big impact on "trust metrics" of Internet companies like Facebook, the social network chief Mark Zuckerberg said Wednesday.

Speaking at a Washington forum, Zuckerberg said Facebook would keep pressing for more transparency about the National Security Agency programs disclosed in recent months believed to collect vast amounts of data on Internet users. Zuckerberg said Facebook keeps a close eye on "trust metrics," or how users feel about the company over time, and that the revelations about the NSA PRISM program had a major impact on trust. Facebook and other Internet firms have filed court petitions seeking to disclose more information about the role of the companies in the NSA program, in the hopes this would ease concerns among Internet users.



Greek protesters clash with a riot policeman in Keratsini, a western suburb of Athens, after a musician was murdered by a suspected neo-Nazi on Wednesday. *Inset*, a protestor raises his fist during the demonstration. Clashes broke out between groups of protesters and police yesterday, as thousands demonstrated against fascism after the leftist musician, Pavlos Fyssas, was murdered.

PHOTO: AFP

Indian minister resigns over rape charge

TNN, Jaipur

Facing charges of rape, Rajasthan's minister of state for dairy and rural industries Babu Lal Nagar resigned yesterday.

He sent his resignation to the chief minister's office. His resignation came two days after a 26-year-old woman accused him of raping her at his residence in pretext of giving her a job.

The woman through an Istegasa (legal) complaint had filed a case in the court. Later, the court had directed the Sodala police station to lodge an FIR. Since, it was the case relating to a sitting MLA the case was transferred to CID-CB wing of the Rajasthan police for the investigation.

Addressing a press conference, Nagar, said, "It is my reply to those who have apprehended that as a minister I can influence the investigation. Thus, I am resigning to let the investigative agency to conduct a free and fair probe."

"I have sent my resignation letter to the chief ministers' office," he added.

Refuting the allegations of rape, he said, "I am being framed in a political conspiracy."

Nagar also said that he has also tendered his resignation to give a clear and loud message that in this scenario his party (Congress) should not be framed." I will fully cooperate in the investigation," he added.

MUZAFFARNAGAR RIOT

UP govt to give 'special pension' to victims

IANs, Lucknow

The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to give "special pension" to people affected by the violence in Muzaffarnagar.

A total of 48 people were killed and more than 43,000 displaced in communal clashes that erupted on September 7 and lasted for three days.

Official sources told IANS that a list of riot-affected people is currently being prepared.

A proposal to give jobs based on educational qualification is also being considered.

"The pension, which would be

anywhere between Rs 400 and Rs 500, would be given under the Rani Laxmi Bai Pension Scheme," an official said.

This pension would be given to families of the dead and to those injured.

Ground work for the rehabilitation package was done at a meeting between district officials and chief secretary Jawed Usmani on Tuesday. Muzaffarnagar officials have been given a deadline of one week to complete the desired work.

The divisional commissioner of Saharanpur has been assigned the task of working out the nitty-

gritty of the scheme.

The state government has also asked officials to expedite work on the disbursement of financial compensation to the riot victims.

"Funds have already reached the district authorities and more than Rs.3.5 crore has been distributed. We just need to step up the pace," an official said.

The state government has announced Rs 10 lakh ex gratia for the kin of those killed in the communal clashes.

The situation in Muzaffarnagar and nearby areas was normal yesterday.

Afghan politician defects to Taliban

BBC ONLINE

A former Afghan senator and district governor has defected to the Taliban in the northern province of Sar-e-Pol, officials have told the BBC.

Qazi Abdul Hai served as a senator between 2004 and 2008 and was later made a district governor in Sar-e-Pol. Correspondents say he is thought to be the highest-ranking civilian official to have joined the Taliban.

The move comes as foreign combat forces prepare to withdraw from Afghanistan in 2014 and ahead of elections next year.

Hai is believed to have defected to the Taliban along with two of his bodyguards on Tuesday.

Officials say it is unclear why he decided to join the Taliban and played down the impact of his decision.

BJP to win 3 of 4 states in upcoming polls: Survey

TNN, New Delhi

The BJP is set to retain power in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh and unseat the Congress in Rajasthan. But in Delhi the party is locked in a neck-and-neck race with the Congress, which could end up in a hung assembly, according to a Times Now-CVoter poll.

If the projections hold, they would come as a massive psychological boost to Narendra Modi and the BJP just months ahead of the Lok Sabha elections of 2014.

According to the poll, which surveyed close to 39,000 people across the four states, the BJP could end up with 30 seats in Delhi, six short of a majority. With the Congress estimated to win 29 and AAP seven, that could well end in a situation where no government can be formed as AAP is unlikely to support either Congress or BJP.

The BSP, the poll suggests, will make its presence felt in each of the four state except Chhattisgarh, but in each case it will be only a marginal player.

C-Voter-Times Now Survey	Delhi	Rajasthan	MP
BJP	30	118	130
Congress	29	64	84
BSP	2	3	5
AAP	7	NA	NA
Others	2	15	11
Total	70	200	230

The slumdog princess

How a descendant of the Indian Moghul rulers now lives in desperate poverty



MAIL ONLINE

Her ancestors would have lived in luxurious palaces while they ruled over a vast and wealthy empire. But Sultana Begum's lifestyle is a far cry from the conditions enjoyed by the rulers of the Mughal empire.

The 60-year-old is the great grand daughter-in-law of the last emperor of India, Bahadur Shah Zafar, and struggles to make ends meet on a basic pension, despite her royal heritage.

Ever since the death of her husband Prince Mirza Bedar Bukht in 1980, Sultana has descended into a life of poverty.

The Mughal heiress is forced to live in a tiny two-room hut in Howrah, a slum area of Kolkatta. She shares a kitchen with her neighbours and washes in the street using water from public taps.

Despite evidence that she is related to the 19th century royal family, Sultana goes about her daily life on a basic pension of just £60 a month.

In recent years her plight has been highlighted by a number of cam-

paigners, who lobbied authorities to provide more care for India's royal descendants, many of whom were left with nothing after British rule ended the Mughal dynasty.

Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, the great-grandfather of Sultana's husband, was placed on the throne in 1837. He was the last of the Mughal emperors who ruled India for three centuries.

In 1857, when Indian soldiers unified and mutinied against their British masters, Bahadur Shah Zafar was declared their commander-in-chief.

But when the uprising was crushed by the British in 1858, he was exiled to Rangoon, where he lived for five years until his death at the age of 87.

Zafar was accompanied into exile by his wife, Zeenat Mahal, and some of the remaining members of the family.

He died in exile on 7 November 1862 in Rangoon, which is now Yangon, the capital of Burma, and was buried at the site that later became known as Bahadur Shah Zafar Dargah.



Bahadur Shah Zafar

VACANCY NOTICE



Empowered lives. Resilient nations.

United Nations Development Programme in Bangladesh announces a post of **Monitoring and Evaluation Officer**, with Upazila Governance Project (SB-3 level) under Service Contract modality. The duration of project is four years.

The duration of the Service Contract (SC) is one year initially, subject to renewal on an annual basis upon satisfactory performance.

For details of the Job Description and instructions to apply, please visit our website: <http://www.undp.org.bd/jobs>. Applications should be received no later than **Tuesday, 1 October 2013**.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Female candidates are particularly encouraged to apply.

Request for Proposal Hiring Consultancy Firm



Empowered lives. Resilient nations.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bangladesh seeks Proposals from interested Companies for Hiring Consultancy Firm to conduct the below services for Strengthening Elections Management in Bangladesh (SEMB) project:

Contracting for Hiring Consultancy Firm for "Production of a training video for polling staff, Ref: RFP-BD-2013-067 and the deadline for submission of Proposals is Thursday, October 03, 2013, 4:30 p.m. Local time.

All interested companies may download the Bidding documents (RFP) from <http://www.bd.undp.org/content/bangladesh/en/home/operations/procurement/>

Submission of Proposal: The envelope should state the tender subject mentioned above and the Proposals must be submitted as per the instructions specified in the RFP document by the deadline mentioned above to the **Registry Unit, UNDP Bangladesh**, IDB Bhaban (12th Floor), Begum Rokeya Sharani, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.