Drone strike kills top

A top suicide bomb-maker

for Somalia's Shebab rebels

has been killed in a drone

strike, government officials

said Tuesday after the latest

attack by US forces against

the Al-Qaeda-linked group.

Abdikarin Hussein Guled

told government radio that

his intelligence services had

been tracking Ibrahim Ali

Abdi, also known as Anta-

the strike took place on

Tiananmen crash

AFP, Beijing

linked to terrorism

Chinese police have named

restive Xinjiang region after

two suspects from the

a car crash on Beijing's

Tiananmen Square killed

said yesterday, as analysts

like a premeditated attack.

In a notice to hotels,

police identified two sus-

pects and four car number

plates, all from Xinjiang, in

relation to a "major case"

on Monday, the Global

US backs Saudi

women drivers

The United States said

"universal rights" of

Monday it supports the

women to drive in Saudi

Arabia, after a weekend

protest there saw several

women defy the law by

taking the steering wheel.

the right of women every-

where to make their own

decisions about their lives

and their futures and the

right to benefit equally

from public services and

protection from discrimi-

nation," US spokeswoman

"We support, of course,

AFP, Washington

said the incident looked

Anta, for some time before

Somali Interior Minister

Shebab militant

AFP, Mogadishu

briet

NEW

AFP, Johannesburg

The mastermind behind a rightwing extremist plot to kill former South African president Nelson Mandela and drive blacks out of the country was sentenced to 35 years in jail yesterday. The ringleader of a white supremacist militia called

Boeremag, Mike du Toit, was given the highest sentence of 35 years along with four other defendants over a botched 2002 plot to overthrow the post-apartheid government, the prosecution said. The judge at the High Court in Pretoria sentenced the rest of the 20 militia members on trial to between 10 and 30

years depending on their degree of involvement in the plot,

National Prosecution Authority spokesman Medupe

Simasiku told AFP. However, several of the defendants will be going home free men because the judge suspended 10 years of the sentences against them and took into account the time behind bars during the trial.

The trial lasted almost a decade until the Boeremag members were convicted in August last year -- the first guilty verdicts for treason since the end of apartheid in 1994. All 20 accused were convicted of treason, but only five of

murder and the plot to kill Nobel peace laureate Mandela, South Africa's first black president. The Boeremag -- Afrikaans for "Boer Force", a reference to

the descendants of the first Dutch colonisers -- had planned to sow chaos through bomb blasts.

A Palestinian woman cries as Israeli municipality workers demolish a house, inset, belonging to a Palestinian family, that was built without permission in the Arab east Jerusalem neighborhood of Beit Hanina, yesterday. Israel was preparing to release 26 long-serving Palestinian prisoners yesterday, the second batch of 104 inmates who are to be freed in line with commitments to US-brokered peace talks. The release, due to take place late at night, will see 21 prisoners going to their homes in the West Bank.

five people, state-run media Somalia if talks fail

Says peace envoy; UN confirms Polio outbreak

City

AFP, Damascus

UN-Arab League envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, in Syria on the most sensitive leg of a regional push for peace talks, has warned of the 'Somalisation' of the war-ravaged country.

His grim warning came as fighting prevented chemical weapons inspectors from visiting two sites, although UN chief Ban Ki-moon said the mission to destroy Syria's arsenal by mid-2014 was still on track.

Brahimi has been seeking to build on the momentum of last month's US-Russian deal to eradicate Syria's chemical weapons in order to launch the so-called Geneva II peace talks proposed for next month.

But the talks have been cast into doubt by the increasingly divided opposition's refusal to attend unless President Bashar al-Assad agrees to step down, a demand rejected by Damascus.

The veteran troubleshooter admitted "the entire world will not be present" at the talks, but said the alternative to a political

settlement could be a failed state in the heart of the Middle East.

"The real danger is a sort of 'Somalisation,' but even more deep and lasting than what we have seen in Somalia." More than 115,000 people are estimated

conflict, which erupted after the regime launched a brutal crackdown on peaceful pro-democracy protests. Meanwhile, a polio outbreak has been confirmed among young children in northeast

to have been killed in Syria's 31-month

Syria and risks spreading in the region, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said yesterday. Twenty-two children in Deir al-Zor province became paralysed this month with

acute flaccid paralysis, symptoms that can be caused by other diseases. "Out of those 22 being investigated, 10 are now confirmed to be polio type one,"

WHO spokesman Oliver Rosenbauer told a news briefing in Geneva.

It is the first outbreak of polio in Syria since 1999, according to the United Nations agency. "Immunisations have started in that

Syria may end up like Tunnel joins 2 continents

MAIL ONLINE

Turkey is for the first time connecting its European and Asian sides with a railway tunnel, which opened yesterday.

The sub-sea passage that runs below the Bosphorus Strait, will link the Asian and European shores of Istanbul for the first time.

The opening of the major engineering project marks the completion of a plan initially proposed by an Ottoman sultan about 150 years ago.

Ottoman Sultan Abdulmejid is said to have first proposed the idea of a tunnel under the Bosphorus about a century and a half ago and one of his successors, Abdulhamid, had architects submit proposals in 1891, but the plans were not carried out.

It is intended to ease traffic congestion in Istanbul as well as creating an important trading route, which connects China and Western Europe.

The tunnel is 13.6 kilometres long, with 1.4 kilometres running under the Bosphorus the strait that connects the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara and divides Istanbul between Asia and Europe.

Turkish officials say that at more than 55 metres deep, it will be the deepest submerged railway tunnel of its type in the world.

Dozens of migrants die of thirst in Niger desert

AFP, Niamey

Dozens of migrants from Niger, most of them women and children, died of thirst in the Sahara desert earlier this month after their vehicle broke down, officials said Monday.

One survivor recalled how a man watched his wife and nine children die, and said the migrants, who were headed for Algeria, had been packed "like cattle" into overcrowded vehicles. Rhissa Feltou, the mayor of the main northern town of Agadez, told

AFP that two vehicles were carrying at least 60 migrants" around October 15", heading for Tamanrassett -- an Algerian town in the heart of the Sahara.

"When one vehicle broke down, the other drove on empty," he said,

"About 40 Nigeriens, including numerous children and women died." The migrants dispersed in small groups in search of an oasis, Rhissa

said. Five survivors reached Arlit and alerted the army, "who arrived too late at the scene".

The army, so far, found the bodies of two women and three adolescents only, a paramilitary policeman told AFP.

"Travellers told us that they saw and counted up to 35 bodies, mostly those of women and children, by the road," said Abdourahmane Maouli, the mayor of the northern uranium mining town of Arlit.

A survivor told Niger's bimonthly Air Info that 82 people had perished, in a further conflicting report on the death toll.

Fatou N'Diaye of the International Organization for Migration in Niger said that 78 people were in the two vehicles heading for Algeria, and that 13 survivors had passed through the organisation's transit centre in Arlit.

Aussie war in Afghanistan over: PM

AFP, Sydney

Prime Minister Tony Abbott declared Australia's longest war at an end during a surprise visit to Afghanistan, with more than 1,000 troops to return home before Christmas in

He reaffirmed Canberra's commitment to support Afghanistan in the future, notably by training Afghan National Security Forces and development assistance. Several hundred Australians will continue to serve in non-

a "bitter-sweet" withdrawal.

Obama's Twitter, FB accounts hacked!

AFP, Washington

Hackers from a group calling itself the Syrian Electronic Army claimed Monday they had taken control of US President Barack Obama's Twitter and Facebook accounts.

The group, which backs Syria's government and previously hacked major organisations, published screen shots which it said

Storm-battered Europe getting back to normal

16 killed; power cut, travel chaos remain AFP, Berlin

Countries in northern Europe lashed by a storm that killed 16 people were still struggling yesterday with power outages and travel disruptions a day after the tempest. After gusting winds and heavy rain, Britain, France, the

Netherlands, Scandinavia and northern Germany began

weighing up the damage left in the storm's wake. In Britain, where four people died, 61,000 households were still without electricity, albeit down from the 600,000 who were cut off at some point Monday, according to

Energy Networks Association. While some trains were delayed or cancelled, services were returning to schedule.

In Germany, where seven people died in the storms since Sunday, train operator Deutsche Bahn warned that lines in the north of the country could take time to resume normal services.

Most train lines in southern Sweden were operating again but about 60,000 homes were still without electricity and some 35,000 phone customers are without landlines. The storm also killed 2 people in Netherlands and caused

extensive damages.

The storm also claimed one life in France, where it has been named Christian, while British media dubbed it St Jude after the patron saint of lost causes whose feast day was Monday.



Nobel Peace Laureate and Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi is being welcomed by Pope Francis during a private audience at the Vatican, on Monday. During the meet, Pope Francis called for inter-religious dialogue in Myanmar. She was awarded an honorary citizen of Rome on Sunday. PHOTO: AFP

'Modi may not lead India effectively'

APP, New York

Pointing out that over 1,000 people, mostly Muslims, were killed in 2002 in the Indian State of Gujarat under his watch, Narendra Modi, who was the State's chief minister and now opposition BJP's prime ministerial candidate, may not be able to lead

India effectively if he inspires "fear" and "antipathy" among many of its people, the New York Times said in an editorial published on Oct 26.

"His rise to power is deeply troubling to many Indians, especially the country's 138 million Muslims and its many other minorities," the Editorial Board of the New York Times said in an editorial.

Modi has shown no ability to work with opposition parties or tolerate dissent, the editorial said, noting that he has already alienated BJP's political partners when Janata Dal (United), "an important regional party broke off its 17-year alliance with the party because it found Modi unacceptable".

"India is a country with multiple religions, more than a dozen major languages and numerous ethnic groups and tribes. Mr Modi cannot hope to lead it effectively if he inspires fear and antipathy among many of its people," said the editorial, which also questioned Modi's economic track record in Gujarat.

188 nations condemn US embargo on Cuba at UN

AFP, United Nations

A record-equalling 188 countries yesterday backed an annual UN General Assembly vote condemning the five-decade-old US embargo against communist Cuba.

The United States found only one other country, Israel, to oppose the resolution, down from two allies in last year's vote, in a sign of mounting opposition to the blockade.

Three Pacific island states normally close to the United

States -- Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Palau -abstained as the barrage of criticism against the embargo reached a new peak in the

193-member UN Assembly.

PTI, Lahore

A teenage girl was buried alive after being raped in Pakistan's Punjab province, prompting a court to order a probe into the brutal attack. Siddique Mughal, a resident of a

village in Toba Tek Singh district, located 225km from Lahore, told police that his 13-year-old daughter was abducted by two unidentified men. The men took the girl to a deserted

place and raped her. They believed she had died during the assault and buried her by the roadside, Mughal said. However, the girl regained consciousness

and dug her way out of the mud covering her. A passerby took her to a nearby rural health centre after she raised an alarm. The Lahore high court chief justice's Complaint Cell took notice of the inci-

dent on Saturday and directed the district and sessions judge of Toba Tek Singh to probe the matter. The sessions judge subsequently directed police to take steps to arrest the rapists, complete their investigation and submit a

report to the court without any delay.

Girl raped, burried Morsi rejects authority alive but survives of Egypt court

Judges withdraw from Brotherhood chief's trial

AFP, Cairo

Egypt's ousted president Mohamed Morsi has rejected the authority of the court that is due to try him next week for incitement to murder as Muslim Brotherhood chief Mohamed Badie and his aides withdrew from the proceedings yesterday, citing "reasons of conscience".

Badie and his two deputies, Khairat al-Shater and Rashad al-Bayoumi, face charges related to the deaths of June 30.

tion," head judge Mohammed

Fahmy al-Qarmuty told the court at

protesters who stormed the Brotherhood's Cairo headquarters on "The judges are retiring from this case for reasons of conscience and the accused must remain in deten-

the start of the session. Lawyer for the accused Mohamed

Damaty insisted "there is no evidence at all in the case" and told AFP that the proceedings were "political".

A total of 32 other defendants are three judges presiding in the trial of being prosecuted along with Badie, Shater and Bayoumi. None of the 35 were in the court yesterday, when the second session of their trial began.

> Badie, Shater and Bayoumi face charges of "inciting" the murders of nine protesters on June 30. If found guilty, they face the death penalty.

Morsi, an Islamist hailing from the Muslim Brotherhood who was Egypt's first freely elected leader, was ousted by the military on July 3 amid massive

protests against his year-long rule. He is due to stand trial with 14 others on November 4 for incitement to murder in connection with deadly

clashes between his supporters and

ODDLY enough

Brain has radar for snakes: study

AFP, Washington

A new study on monkeys out Monday says the brain has specific cells that fire off rapid warnings when confronted with slithery danger.

Certain neurons respond "selectively" to images of snakes, and they outpace comparable neurons that react to visuals of faces, hands or geometric shapes, the researchers said.

The report in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences offers new evidence to support the notion that primates evolved keen vision skills so they could survive the threats snakes pose in

Aussie diver kills great white

STAR REPORT

It was either the shark or him. South Australian tuna diver, Dean Stefanek, 38, battled a 6-meter shark



for 30 minutes and lived to tell about it.

Although, he said he regrets having to kill the massive White shark, he said he felt it was either the shark, or him.

He said he volunteered to jump into a tuna pen to try to kill the injured shark.