

'Try coup leaders'

Morsi tells Egyptian court; trial halted after disruption

AGENCIES

Egypt's deposed president has defiantly told a court in Cairo that he is the country's "legitimate" leader and it has no jurisdiction to try him.

Yesterday's trial was Mohammed Morsi's first public appearance since the military coup that ousted him on July 3. Morsi and 14 other Muslim Brotherhood members are charged with inciting the killing of protesters outside the presidential palace in December 2012.

The leader of the Muslim Brotherhood rejected the proceedings and said he had been forced to attend. "This is a military coup whose leaders must be put on trial in accordance with the constitution," Morsi told the court.

"I am the president of the republic and I am here against my will ... What is happening here is providing cover for the military coup," he said, as his co-defendants chanted "down, down with military coup."

The judge halted proceedings soon after they started because of the defendants' chants, Egyptian state television reported. The trial resumed but was later adjourned until January 8 to allow defense lawyers to review documents.

Looking healthy, Morsi appeared in court wearing a dark blue suit, but no tie. He had refused to wear a prison uniform as the judge had ordered, according to security officials.

Security officials inside the courtroom said the earlier



adjournment was caused by Morsi's insistence that he would not change into the prison uniform customarily worn by defendants, part of his refusal to recognise the trial's legitimacy.

Since he was overthrown, Morsi has been held at a secret military location. He was flown by helicopter to the trial venue a police academy in an eastern Cairo district.

Morsi's supporters, battered by a bloody and sweeping police crackdown, accuse the army-installed government of fabricating the charges

against the Islamist leader and yesterday rallied at several places in the capital against the military.

Outside, dozens of them brandished posters of Morsi and signs bearing anti-military messages. Thousands also protested in front of the constitutional court in the south of the capital.

"Morsi's trial is a farce. The criminals are trying the legitimate president," said one of them.

Tensions were also high in front of the high court in downtown Cairo where pro- and anti-Morsi supporters had gathered.

Morsi and the others are charged with inciting murder and could face the death penalty if convicted.

Amnesty International said Morsi should be granted a fair trial, including the right to challenge evidence against him.

"Failing to do so would further call into question the motives behind his trial," said the watchdog's Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui.



Iranians burn US flags outside the former US embassy in Tehran yesterday, during a demonstration to mark the 34th anniversary of the 1979 US embassy takeover. Thousands of Iranians shouted "Death to America" as they demonstrated 34 years after Islamist students stormed the embassy compound in Tehran, holding 52 American diplomats hostage for 444 days.

PHOTO: AFP

NEWSIN brief

Need more time: Rahul on ISI comment

NDTV ONLINE

Rahul Gandhi wants another week to respond to charges that he tried to incite communal hatred through speeches that he delivered in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh last month.

The allegations against the 43-year-old have been leveled by the BJP, which registered a complaint against Rahul with the Election Commission. Rahul was asked to send his reply by yesterday.

Westgate mall attackers charged

AFP, Nairobi

Kenya charged four men, none accused of being the gunmen, yesterday in connection with the Westgate mall massacre in September, an attack claimed by Somalia's Al-Qaeda-linked Shebab in which at least 67 people were killed.

All pleaded not guilty to court charges including "supporting a terrorist group", as well as entering Kenya illegally and obtaining false identification documents.

Mali murder suspects arrested

AFP, Bamako

Around a dozen suspects have been arrested over the killing of two French journalists in Mali, a police source in the north of the country told AFP on Monday.

Radio France Internationale reporter Ghislaine Dupont, 57, and sound technician Claude Verlon, 55, were kidnapped and killed by what Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said were "terrorist groups" in the flashpoint northeastern town of Kidal on Saturday.

US spying outrageous: Google boss

AFP, Hong Kong

Google executive chairman Eric Schmidt said reports that the US government spied on the Internet giant's data centres were "outrageous" and potentially illegal if proved true, in an interview yesterday.

Speaking to the Wall Street Journal during a visit to Hong Kong, the technology guru said that Google had filed complaints with the National Security Agency, US President Barack

11 dead in north Iraq violence

AFP, Baghdad

A series of attacks north of Baghdad -- including multiple bombings targeting police -- killed 11 people yesterday, as Iraq grapples with its worst bloodshed since 2008.

Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki has appealed to Washington for greater cooperation in fighting militancy.

No peace through 'senseless force'

Says Pak PM over US drone attacks

AFP, Bahawalpur

Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif yesterday warned peace could not be achieved "by unleashing senseless force", in his first public speech since a US drone strike killed Taliban leader Hakimullah Mehsud.

The killing of Hakimullah on Friday as government representatives prepared to meet his Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan faction triggered an angry response from Islamabad while Afghan president Hamid Karzai said the strike "took place at an unsuitable time".

Pakistan's interior minister Chaudhry Nisar on Saturday accused Washington of sabotaging peace efforts with the drone strike.

Though Sharif did not mention the drone strike directly, he stressed his desire to "give peace a chance".

"My government is firmly resolved to



bringing the cycle of bloodshed and violence to an end.

"But it cannot be done overnight, nor can it be done by unleashing senseless force against our citizens, without first making every effort to bring the misguided and confused elements of society, back to the mainstream," he said in a speech after army exercises near Bahawalpur in Punjab province.

Afghan leader Karzai meanwhile told a US Congress delegation visiting Kabul he hoped the peace process, still at an embryonic stage, did not suffer as a result, according to a statement released by his office late Sunday.

The TTP operate separately from the Afghan Taliban but notionally pledge allegiance to the same leader, Mullah Omar.

Karzai has been seeking to open peace talks with the Afghan Taliban to end 12 years of war, but the Islamist militants have refused to negotiate with his appointees, dismissing him as a puppet of Washington.



Foreign workers show their passports as they gather outside a Saudi immigration office waiting for an exit permit as Saudi security begin their search campaign against illegal labourers yesterday in downtown of Riyadh.

PHOTO: AFP

Thai protesters march against amnesty

AFP, Bangkok

Thousands of protesters marched through Bangkok yesterday, seeking to raise pressure on the Thai government over its controversial political amnesty bill.

The opposition fears that the legislation could allow fugitive former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, toppled in a military coup in 2006, to return.

More than 10,000 protesters joined the march to the Grand Palace from a railway station in the city where they had held several days of rallies since Thursday, according to police.

"It is time to unite to fight and ask people who love the country to protect our nation," opposition MP and former deputy premier Suthep Thaugsuban told a cheering crowd.

US-Saudi ties strategic, enduring: Kerry

AFP, Riyadh

US Secretary of State John Kerry said yesterday that US ties with Saudi Arabia are "strategic and enduring", insisting Washington and Riyadh shared the same goal in the Syrian conflict.

"Our relationship is strategic, it is enduring and it covers a wide range" of issues, he told reporters as he wound up a visit to the kingdom aimed at easing tensions with the traditional ally over US policies on Syria and Iran.

"There is no difference in our mutually agreed upon goal in Syria," Kerry told a joint press conference with his Saudi counterpart, Prince Saud al-Faisal.

The US top diplomat insisted Washington "will not stand idly by as (Syrian President Bashar al-) Assad continues to use weapons" against his own people.

Prince Saud, meanwhile, said any proposed talks to end Syria's 31-month-old conflict could not go on forever.

"The kingdom realises the importance of

negotiations to solve crises... But talks cannot go on indefinitely," he said, in reference to efforts to convene a US-Russian proposed peace conference.

He said that the kingdom, which openly backs the Syrian rebels, wants a solution that would "bring an end to the tragedies."

Kerry and his Saudi host held the press conference following a two-hour meeting between the secretary of state and King Abdullah.

Ahead of the meeting, Kerry said Washington's relations with Riyadh should stay "on track."

"Right now we have some very important things to talk about to make certain the Saudi-

US relationship is on track, moving forward and doing the things that we need to accomplish," he told embassy staff in Riyadh.

Kerry's visit to Riyadh was aimed at easing tensions triggered by US policy on Syria after it backed down from military action last month and by a fledgling outreach to Iran over its nuclear programme.



Indian Congress wants ban on opinion polls

THE HINDU ONLINE

Terming opinion polls as a "racket", "farce" and "manipulated" exercise, the Indian Congress yesterday made a strong pitch to ban them.

The party also rejected BJP's criticism that Congress was opposing opinion polls as it was "scared" of Narendra Modi since these surveys are now predicting an edge to the opposition party.

The public responses of Congress leaders advocating a ban on such polls have come days after AICC wrote to the Election Commission for restriction on their publication and dissemination during elections while noting that the random surveys were "erroneous", "lack credibility" and could be "manipulated" by vested interests.

"...These have become a farce. They should be banned altogether. The kind of complaints, information that I have got show that anybody can pay and get a survey as desired...In a country of 1.2 billion people, how can a few thousand people predict the trend?," party general secretary Digvijay Singh said.

Union Minister Rajiv Shukla, speaking separately, said that opinion polls are also at times "manipulated" and, hence, the party has done the right thing opposing it.

Manmohan rejected contentions that Congress changed its mind on the issue, saying he has been maintaining this about opinion polls from day one. "Not from today. We have always been against them from day one," he said.

Musharraf granted bail in all cases

AFP, Islamabad

A Pakistan court yesterday granted bail to former military ruler Pervez Musharraf over a deadly raid on a radical mosque, bringing closer his possible release after more than six months of house arrest.

The ruling means the ex-

general is on bail in all the cases brought against him since his return

to Pakistan from self-imposed exile, including one relating to the assassination of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto.

But the 70-year-old is likely to remain under heavy guard at his villa on the edge of Islamabad because of serious threats to his life.



More shutdown, more suffering

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taker government.

Of the dead, an activist of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) was killed in Lalmonirhat, while a passenger of a CNG-run auto-rickshaw succumbed to his injuries at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Mostafizur Rahman Mukul, 35, a purchase officer of Biswas Group, died from burn injuries at the DMCH around 10:30am yesterday, 12 hours after miscreants in Savar had hurled a petrol bomb at the three-wheeler he was in, igniting fire in the vehicle.

A teenage boy was fighting for life at the burn unit of the hospital yesterday as his whole body was burned when some pro-hartal pickets torched a covered van parked on the Dhaka-Meymensingh highway at Joydebpur intersection around 9:45am.

The victim, Monir Hossain, 14, was in the vehicle, his father Ramjan Ali, driver of the van, told The Daily Star at the DMCH.

Violence across the country claimed 14 lives during the last week's (October 27-29) 60-hour hartal.

Like the previous hartals, activists of BNP and Jamaat-Shibir clashed with ruling Awami League men and law enforcers in different parts of the country and blasted crude bombs, leaving scores injured.

In the capital, pro-hartal pickets exploded cocktails at different areas, including the judges' court premises in Old Dhaka.

Miscreants torched at least 10 vehicles in the city between 12:00 midnight and 7:45pm yesterday.

Unidentified goons blasted a cocktail inside the boundary wall of the Gulshan residence of prime minister's public administration affairs

adviser HT Imam at 7:30pm, said Gulshan police.

Two live crude bombs were recovered from the fifth floor of the District Judge's Court building, while pickets blasted two more near the mosque of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court and Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court.

City residents came out on the streets to do their routine work. Many businesses and offices were open and a large number of vehicles plied the city streets.

In the evening, authorities deployed Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) members in the capital to maintain law and order.

In Lalmonirhat, Chhatra Dal activist Nasir Uddin, 24, was killed as police opened fire to stop a clash between the BNP-Jamaat and AL men near the Dharla bridge under Patgram upazila at 10:00am.

Police said the clash ensued when the ruling party

men obstructed a procession by BNP-Jamaat activists at the Dharla bridge area. Both the groups threw at least 20 crude bombs at each other, leaving at least 20 people injured.

Law enforcers initially fired tear gas shells and rubber bullets to bring the situation under control. But as the Jamaat men hurled cocktails at police, cops opened fire in retaliation, leaving the JCD men dead and four more opposition men injured by bullets.

Some BNP men stormed a Hindu village at Satpatki Majhipara in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila around 12:30pm. They vandalised and looted houses, leaving at least 15 people injured.

In Bogra, assistant government pleader (AGP) Salek Sarkar, 50, was injured in a cocktail blast at the District Judge's Court premises in the town around 12:00noon.

Resident of Shatmatha area in the town, Salek was struck by bomb splinters, said Bogra

police. He received treatment at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital.

In Satkhira, pickets broke the windowpanes of the chamber building of senior judge Shimul Biswas by throwing bricks.

In Patuakhali, at least 30 people were injured in a clash between AL and BNP men at Baherchar area under Rangabali upazila around 12:00noon.

In Chapainawabganj, at least eight cops, including the OC of Sadar Model Police Station, were injured in a clash between police and Jamaat-Shibir men at the town's Boro Indira intersection in the afternoon.

Stray incidents of clashes, vandalism and explosion of crude bombs were also reported in Narayanganj, Rangpur, Natore, Jhenidah, Pirojpur, Madaripur, Gazipur, Chandpur, Bagerhat, Kurigram and Feni.

POST-9/11

CIA made doctors torture terrorists

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

Doctors and psychologists working for the US military violated the ethical codes of their profession under instruction from the defence department and the CIA to become involved in the torture and degrading treatment of suspected terrorists, an investigation has concluded.

The report of the Taskforce on Preserving Medical Professionalism in National Security Detention Centres concludes that after 9/11, health professionals working with the military and intelligence services "designed and participated in cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment and torture of detainees".

Medical professionals were in effect told that their ethical mantra "first do no harm" did not apply, because they were not treating people who were ill.

The report lays blame primarily on the defence department (DoD) and the CIA, which required their healthcare staff to put aside any scruples in the interests of intelligence gathering and security practices that caused severe harm to detainees, from waterboarding to sleep deprivation and force-feeding.

The two-year review by the 19-member taskforce, Ethics Abandoned: Medical Professionalism and Detainee Abuse in the War on Terror says that the DoD termed those involved in interrogation "safety officers" rather than doctors.