## WHAT IS LEFT OF THE ARAB SPRINGS

#### **BAHRAIN**

- Protest movement erupted on February 14, 2011
- Protest put down a month later Shiite majority contests the ruling Sunni dynasty

#### to this day **EGYPT**

- President Hosni Mubarak handed over to the army on February 11, 2011
- Almost 850 died in the general revolt
- First freely elected President Mohammed Morsi ousted by armed forces on July 03, 2013
- More than 1,000 (mainly Morsi supporters) killed in street clashes since

#### LIBYA

• Authorities struggled to maintain order since Moamer Gaddafi's regime collapse in October 2011

- They rely on former rebel groups The armed militias challenge the state if their
- interests are threatened

Shiite Muslims pitted against Sunnis after peaceful protests transformed to all-out war since March 2011's brutal crack-down headed by President Bashar al-Assad

Millions displaced and more than 126,000 dead

## **TUNISIA**

**SYRIA** 

- Birthplace of the "Arab Spring"
- Zine El Abidine Ben Ali fled on January 14, 2011
- Still without a strong central government A constituent assembly dominated by Islamists from the Ennahda party was elected in October 2011 Beset by chronic social unrest and political crises

#### Two opposition figures murdered this year YEMEN

- President Ali Abdullah Saleh stepped down in February 2012
- Still struggling to establish a new constitution under a UN- and Gulf-backed transition The main sticking point is southern Yemen's
- demand for autonomy

## Mandela family feuded as he lay in state

AFP, Johannesburg

A feud within Nelson Mandela's family raged even as the peace icon lay in state, with members arguing over access to his rural homestead, a report said yesterday.

The Times daily reported that family members had "pushed out" Mandla Mandela, the statesman's oldest grandson and heir to his clan title, from the family home in the village of Qunu in the Eastern Cape province where the anti-apartheid hero was laid to rest on Sunday.

house shortly after his eldest daughter, Makaziwe, arrived

Makaziwe is said to have overseen the funeral preparations, while Mandla was the public face of the family.

The two have long been arguing about control of Mandela's legacy.

The newspaper said locks were changed at the Mandela there on Thursday.

Ukraine leader

seeks cash

from Putin

Ukraine's embattled

Yanukovych left behind

furious anti-government

rallies yesterday to negoti-

ate a multi-billion lifeline

Putin that protesters fear

will ruin their EU integra-

The ex-Soviet nation of

46 million has been at the

heart of a furious diplo-

Yanukovych's shock deci-

sion last month to ditch a

landmark EU partnership

agreement and seek closer

Yesterday's high-stakes

ties with its traditional

meeting at the Kremlin

trated EU officials sus-

orbit for the first time.

comes two days after frus-

pended months of negotia-

tions they had hoped would

pull Ukraine out of Russia's

"Ministers confirmed

again today the European

Union's readiness to sign

Ukraine is ready and the

relevant conditions are

met," EU foreign policy

rial meeting in Brussels.

But Yanukovych will

instead be hoping to win

estimated by local media at

anywhere between \$5 and

view as Putin's reward for

power.And the Kremlin is

ready to help him because

this meets Putin's strategic

political analyst Volodymyr

Yanukovych's reversal

sparked the largest anti-

government rallies since

the 2004 pro-democracy

Orange Revolution that

westward path.

first nudged Ukraine on a

interests," said Ukrainian

Kiev's U-turn on the EU

Yanukovych keep

Fesenko.

\$12 billion -- that his critics

an urgently needed cash

advance from Russia --

chief Catherine Ashton said

on Monday after a ministe-

the (agreement) as soon as

master Russia.

matic tug of war since

with Russia's Vladimir

President Viktor

tion dreams.

AFP, Kiev







Clockwise from left: Tunisians yesterday, carry portraits of assassinated opposition figure Mohamed Brahmi, gather to mark the third anniversary of the uprising that toppled deposed president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Sidi Bouzid's Mohamed Bouazizi square. A Tunisian man prays at the graveside of 26-year-old street vendor Mohammed Bouazizi, whose self-immolation three years ago led to the uprising. Tunisian cigarette vendor Adel Khadri sits on the ground after immolating himself in an act of desperation on a street in Tunis on March 12, 2013 hours before lawmakers were to vote on a new government to pull Tunisia out of political crisis.

# India's parliament passes Lokpal Bill

AFP, New Delhi

India's upper house of parliament yesterday passed a long-delayed bill to combat graft, with both main parties prompted to back it after a stunning showing by a new anti-corruption party in recent polls. The ruling Congress and the main opposition

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) voted in favour of the tough bill in the upper house, in a rare show of unity in the normally disruptive and chaotic parliament. "Today is a historic day. I thank all the parties for

ensuring the smooth passage of the bill," Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kamal Nath told reporters outside the parliament in New Delhi. The Lokpal Bill will head to the lower house today

for a vote on amendments added to the legislation, before being sent to the president for approval. The flagship bill passed the lower house back in 2011 after a mass movement against India's endemic corruption spurred the ruling Congress-

led coalition government into action. But the bill failed to clear the upper house amid political divisions, in a major blow to Congress, which itself is embroiled in a string of graft scandals

and keen to signal its intentions to fight corruption. Under the bill, an independent ombudsman would be created with powers to investigate and prosecute public officials including MPs, ministers, and in certain cases, the prime minister for graft.

Renewed support for the bill comes after civil

state polls in Delhi this month in a key test ahead of general elections due by May. Kejriwal, who campaigned on a promise of cleaning

servant-turned-corruption fighter Arvind Kejriwal

up dirty politics, was a key member of the grass-roots movement that demanded the tough law back in 2011.

tion and caught Congress unawares. Hazare was yesterday into the eighth day of a hunger strike to push for the bill's passing, a suc-

to its introduction into parliament. "I thank everyone for passing this bill. Parliamentarians have realised that the people of the country are fed up of corruption," he said in

Hazare added that he would break his fast only "once the lower house clears the bill."

# Syria peace talks to | NEWS<sub>IN</sub> open in Montreux | brief

AFP, Geneva

The long-delayed "Geneva II" peace conference for Syria will open in the Swiss lakeside town of Montreux because of a lack of hotel space in Geneva, the United Nations said yesterday. "The international conference on Syria.

will be held due to logistical reasons... in Montreux," said Khawal Mattar, spokeswoman for UN-Arab League envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, who is trying to organise the conference. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon last

month finally set January 22 as the date for the talks, which have been repeatedly postponed since June. The conference centre at the Montreux Palace will only host the first day of high-

level talks on January 22, hosted by Ban and including all invited country delegations. Negotiations between the two Syrian

delegations and Brahimi will then continue a the UN's European headquarters in Geneva on January 24 but it has not been decided how long the talks will continue, Mattar said.

More than 126,000 people have been killed in the 33-month conflict pitting forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad against rebels fighting to topple his regime.

### India downgrades privileges of US diplomats

PTI, New Delhi

India yesterday reacted strongly to the arrest of its Deputy Consul-General in New York by initiating series of steps to strip U.S. diplomats and their families of privileges including withdrawing all airport passes and stopping import clearances for the embassy.

Asking all consulate personnel and their families to turn in their ID cards immediately, the government has also sought key information such as salaries paid to all Indian staff employed at the consulates and by consulate officers and

## Air raids kill 13 in Syria's Aleppo

AFP, Beirut

Two children were among at least 13 people killed in new air strikes on a rebelheld district of Syria's main northern city of Aleppo

yesterday, a watchdog said. The new raids came after air strikes on rebel-held areas of Aleppo on Sunday killed 76 people, among them 28 children. Strikes on Monday

## killed a further 10 civilians, Lebanon car bomb

targets Hezbollah

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

A car bomb went off near a Hezbollah base in eastern Lebanon early yesterday, officials said, the latest in a wave of deadly attacks that have targeted the Shia militant group's interests in

Lebanon. The Lebanese National News Agency said a suicide bomber detonated his eastern Bekaa Valley near

## vehicle in the remote area of the village of Sbouba in the Baalbek region, about a mile from a base belonging

## **UN supplies Philippine** farmers seeds

AFP, Rome

The UN food agency yesterday said it had begun supplying farmers in the Philippines with emergency seed supplies after a devastating typhoon that struck just at the beginning of the planting season.

The Rome-based Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said it was delivering rice and corn seed to rural communities in the Visayan island group that will allow farmers to collect a harvest in

#### Battles rage in Juba AFP, Juba

day in South Sudan's capital Juba, witnesses said, as troops loyal to the president fought rival soldiers accused of staging a coup in the world's youngest nation.

resumed in the early hours



she swept to victory in

failed to grab an outright

vote, although secret,

seats, Merkel's conserva-

left partners, the Socia

huge majority under their

confirmed by President

coalition' deal.

A young Palestinian Bedouin girl eats a peice of bread at their encampment in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. A fierce winter storm shut down much of the Middle East last week leaving people to clear up following flood waters and heavy snow in some countries.

РНОТО: AFP

## Merkel elected as chancellor for 3rd term

AFP, Berlin

Germany's parliament elected Angela Merkel as chancellor for a third term yesterday, ending nearly three months of uncertainty since elections that forced her to seek a 'grand coalition' with her rivals.

Merkel, 59, who is now set to govern Europe's top economy for another four years, was re-elected by 462 members of the Bundestag lower house of parliament, with 150 voting against and nine abstentions.

"I accept the election result and thank you for your trust," said Merkel, dressed in a black trouser suit, having accepted a bunch of flowers before shaking the hands of supporters.

general elections but majority, the Bundestag came as no surprise. "A Russian loan can help With 504 of the 631

Eighty-six days after

tives and their new centre-

Democrats (SPD), hold a hard-fought 'grand

She must now be Joachim Gauck at his

palace before returning to the Bundestag to be sworn in as Germany's only third post-war chancellor to win a third mandate. Merkel on Monday promised "solid finances, secure prosperity and

social welfare" and said that "a grand coalition is a coalition for grand tasks - we want to make sure that the people in 2017 are better off, even better off, than they are today".

She has defended the time spent haggling over policy and posts with an initially reluctant SPD as time well spent, voicing appreciation on signing the coalition pact Monday "that we listened to each other".

## undecided on election boycott

dom deeper into turmoil, after weeks of street protests against Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra and her brother Thaksin. Yingluck called the February 2 election

after the opposition Democrat Party resigned en masse from parliament on December 8 to join the demonstrations, which have drawn tens of thousands to Bangkok's streets. A boycott -- which would echo the

the army coup that ousted Thaksin -would placate street protesters, he explained, but risked "long-term damage" to the party by stepping outside of the existing political process.

Conversely, participation would see the party "lose support of the protesters," spokesman for the Democrats Chavanond Intarakomalyasut said.

and his Aam Aadmi Party trounced Congress in

That campaign was spearheaded by activist Anna Hazare who led countrywide protests that tapped into a rich seam of public anger at India's corrup-

cessful move back in 2011 when his 12-day fast led

televised comments from the fast venue in western Maharashtra state.

## Snowden in asylum offer to Brazil

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

Edward Snowden has offered to help Brazil investigate US spying on its soil in exchange for political asylum, in an open letter from the NSA whistleblower to the Brazilian people published by the Folha de S Paulo newspaper. "I've expressed my willingness to assist where it's appro-

priate and legal, but, unfortunately, the US government has been working hard to limit my ability

to do so," Snowden said in the letter. Snowden - granted a year's asylum until next summer in Russia - said he

had been impressed by the Brazilian government's strong criticism of the NSA spy programme, including monitoring the mobile phone of the Brazilian president, Dilma Rousseff. In his letter, Snowden used

Brazilian examples to explain the extent of the US surveillance he had revealed. "Today, if you carry a cellphone in São Paulo, the NSA can track where you are, and it does - it does so 5bn times a day worldwide. Snowden's offer comes a day after the White House

dashed hopes that the US might be considering an amnesty for the whistleblower, insisting he should still return to the US to stand trial.

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's opposition party said yesterday it remained undecided over whether to boycott snap polls called by the government to mollify massive street protests. A boycott would likely plunge the king-

Democrats stance in 2006 that precipitated

## Thai opposition US warns China against imposing South China Sea air zone

AFP, Manila

US Secretary of State John Kerry warned China yesterday against imposing an air defence zone over the South China Sea, similar to one it declared over disputed islands in the East China Sea. "The zone should not be implemented and China

should refrain from taking similar, unilateral actions elsewhere in the region, and particularly over the South China Sea, "Kerry told a news conference in Manila. The Philippines warned last month that China's

announcement of an Air Defence Identification Zone in the East China Sea raised the prospect of it doing the same for the South China Sea. The Philippines, China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have overlapping claims to parts of the strategically

"Today, I raised our deep concerns about China's announcement of an East China Sea air defence identification zone," Kerry said, referring to his discussions in Manila with Philippine Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario.

vital and potentially resource-rich South China Sea.

"I told the foreign secretary that the United States does not recognise that (East China Sea) zone and does not accept it." Analysts warn that the ADIZ in the East China Sea is a

forerunner to a similar zone in the South China Sea, which Beijing claims almost in its entirety. Tensions between the Philippines and China have risen

in recent years as Beijing becomes more forthright in asserting its claim over most of the South China Sea.

## Fierce battles raged yester-

The continued gunfire