

NEWS IN brief

Jayalithaa to remain in jail till October 7

THE HINDU ONLINE
The Special Sitting of the Karnataka High Court has adjourned Jayalithaa's bail plea to Tuesday, October 7, 2014. Vacation judge Justice Rathnakala said that this matter has to be heard by a regular bench. Jayalithaa, 66, was jailed for four years on Saturday over a graft case for amassing wealth illegally.

Iraq violence killed 1,119 last month: UN

AFP, Baghdad
Acts of violence across Iraq killed at least 1,119 people last month, according to UN figures released yesterday excluding the restive western province of Anbar and casualties among jihadists. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) said at least 854 civilians and 265 members of the security forces were killed in September, and close to 2,000 injured.

ECP ready to introduce electronic voting

DAWN ONLINE
After facing criticism over the quality of magnetised ink used in last year's general elections, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has decided to introduce electronic voting machines in two years and use them in next polls, due in 2018. ECP Secretary Ishtiaq Ahmad Khan said the commission would call for an immediate amendment to the Constitution to remove legal barrier in the way of introducing the technology, after which the pilot project would be launched.

10 killed in shelling on school in east Ukraine

REUTERS, Donetsk
At least 10 people were killed yesterday when shells hit a school playground and a mini-van in a nearby street in Donetsk in eastern Ukraine, city authorities and Reuters witnesses said. There were no children among those killed in the shelling at School No 57 on the first day of the new school year, though witnesses said the dead included a biology teacher and the parent of a child at the school.

Trains collide in India; 12 killed

AFP, New Delhi
Two passenger trains packed with festive travellers collided in northern India, killing at least 12 people and injuring 45, a railway spokesman said yesterday. The Lucknow-Barauni Express was changing tracks late Tuesday when it was hit from behind by the Krishak Express in Uttar Pradesh state, throwing carriages onto their sides, said spokesman Anil Kumar Saxena. The driver of the Krishak Express has been suspended for overshooting the signal, the spokesman said. Railways Minister Sadanand Gowda said human error appeared to be the cause of the accident, with an official inquiry underway.



Pro-democracy protesters face policemen as they wait for Hong Kong chief executive outside the Legislative Council Office in Hong Kong, yesterday. The spike in tensions came after three days of peaceful demonstrations that have seen tens of thousands of people take over major Hong Kong highways, calling for Beijing to allow free elections in the semi-autonomous city.

PHOTO: AFP

Israel PM warns Obama over Iran

Palestinians ask UN to end Israeli occupation by 2016

AGENCIES

A skeptical Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday directly warned US President Barack Obama not to accept any Iran deal that would allow Tehran to become a "threshold nuclear power."

They renewed their often prickly relationship in the Oval Office, meeting for the first time since their governments swapped some of the most harsh rhetoric in years over the Gaza crisis.

The Israeli leader delivered a clear signal that Israel was dismayed at the outlines of a possible agreement.

Netanyahu said at the United Nations this week that Iran was trying to "bamboozle" the world into sealing a nuclear deal that would leave Tehran with the capacity of thousands of centrifuges to enrich uranium. The nuclear threshold is the point at which a nation is considered to have the radioactive material, equipment and know-how to quickly produce a nuclear device, but has not yet taken the decision to do so.

Israel says it reserves the right to take military action against Iran's nuclear program if a deal is not reached to dismantle it.

Obama said he also wanted to discuss the rebuilding of Gaza with Netanyahu following the brutal war with Hamas which killed more than 2,000 Palestinians and 73 Israelis, most of them civilians.

Meanwhile, the Palestinians yesterday asked the UN Security Council to set November 2016 as the deadline for ending the Israeli occupation, according to a draft resolution obtained by AFP yesterday.

The draft, circulated to council members, follows Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas' address last week to the UN General Assembly in which he called for a fast-track to statehood. The text, put forward by the Arab group, calls for "full withdrawal of Israel, occupying power, from all of the

Regional connectivity discussed

AGENCIES

Infrastructure connectivity and terrorism in South Asia occupied a key place in talks between US President Barack Obama and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during their first meeting in Washington on Tuesday.

The president and the PM emphasized the need to accelerate infrastructure connectivity and economic development corridors for regional economic integration linking South, Southeast, and Central Asia, a joint statement issued after Obama-Modi talks said.

It said Obama reiterated that the United States, through its New Silk Road and India-Pacific Economic Corridor, is promoting the linkage of India to its neighbours and the wider region to enable a freer flow of commerce and energy.

India has been prodding Bangladesh for providing road and waterways connectivity and the issue came up during the first meet-

ing between Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Modi on the margins of the UN General Assembly on September 27.

MODI-OBAMA MEET

- India won't join anti-ISIS coalition
- US-India agrees deal on climate
- Agree on joint Mars mission
- US to help India develop three smart cities

Emerging from the 90-minute talks with Obama on Tuesday, Modi said that they discussed the challenges posed by terrorism. "We discussed existing terrorism challenges including in south Asia and new threats in west Asia," he said.

The two countries have agreed to

share intelligence and cooperate on counter-terrorism measures. They also discussed the need to dismantle "safe havens" for terrorists, said the joint statement.

However, an official from Ministry of External Affairs said India will not join the US-led military campaign against the so called Islamic State in Iraq.

The Obama administration reached an agreement with India on Tuesday on measures intended to accelerate that country's shift to renewable fuels, steps that officials say will reduce carbon emissions while helping India's new government extend electricity to all of its 1.2 billion citizens.

The package also contained a modest step toward reducing global emissions of hydrofluorocarbons, industrial chemicals that act as a powerful greenhouse gas in the atmosphere. Indian officials formally agreed to engage in international discussions that the White

House hopes will lead to a phaseout of the chemicals, known as HFCs.

The United States and India, fresh from sending their own respective spacecraft into Mars' orbit earlier this month, also agreed to cooperate on future exploration of the Red Planet. Two deals were signed in this regard during a meeting in Toronto, Canada, between Nasa administrator Charles Bolden and Chairman K Radhakrishnan of the Indian Space Research Organization.

And, in a boost to Modi's 100 smart city programme, the US will help India in developing three such cities apart from joining hands with civil society and authorities to provide clean water and sewage facilities in 500 cities in the country.

The three cities are Allahabad, Ajmer and Visakhapatnam.

Winding up his whirlwind five-day US visit on Tuesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi "thanked" America and called his trip a highly "successful and satisfactory".



Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, as rapidly as possible and to be fully completed within a specified timeframe, not to exceed November 2016.

It calls for the world body to respect "the independence and sovereignty of the state of Palestine and the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people."

UN diplomats said the draft resolution stood little chance of being adopted, but the move presents the Security Council with a challenge on how to advance the Middle East peace track if the Palestinian demand is rejected.

Israel is to press ahead with the planned construction of 2,610 settler homes in annexed east Jerusalem, a watchdog said Wednesday. The housing units, which have been slated for construction since 2012 in the neighbourhood of Givat Hamatos, were given final approval last week.



A Syrian Kurdish cries as she holds her baby in the southeastern town of Suruc in the Sanliurfa province after crossing the border between Syria and Turkey, yesterday. Tens of thousands of Syrian Kurds flooded into Turkey fleeing an onslaught by the so called Islamic State (ISIS) group that prompted an appeal for international intervention.

Karadzic takes 'moral responsibility' for crimes

BBC ONLINE

Radovan Karadzic is closing his defence saying he takes "moral responsibility" for crimes committed by Bosnian Serbs but denying he ordered killings.

The wartime Bosnian Serb leader yesterday set out his case in a written brief before telling the UN tribunal there was not a shred of evidence against him.

He is accused in The Hague of genocide and other crimes, with one charge relating to the Srebrenica massacre.

Prosecutors have called for him to be given a life sentence if convicted.

The 69-year-old political leader of the Bosnian Serbs in the 1990s was handed over to the tribunal when he was arrested in 2008 after 13 years on the run.

More than 7,500 Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) men and boys, some as young as 12, were killed by Bosnian Serbs in the Srebrenica enclave in July 1995. The massacre is considered Europe's worst since World War Two.

WAR CRIMES IN BOSNIA



In a written brief that runs to more than 800 pages, Karadzic argues that he was not aware of the Srebrenica killings but takes responsibility for "any crimes committed by citizens and forces of Republika Srpska (Bosnian Serb republic)".

As he conducted his own defence yesterday, he seemed more like a politician outlining his policies than a war crimes suspect facing life in prison, the BBC's Anna Holligan reports.

There was no shaking or stumbling in his delivery, she says. It was the self-assured performance of man who is comfortable in the spotlight.

"It is the Serb people that stand accused," he told his judges. "I know the truth, the prosecution knows the truth, they are trying to delude the court."

UN prosecutor Alan Tieger argued this week that "the policy of ethnic cleansing" had been fully exposed as had "Dr Karadzic as its driving force".

'Putin greater threat to US than ISIS'

MAIL ONLINE

Former world chess champion Garry Kasparov has revealed he believes Vladimir Putin to be a far bigger threat to the US than ISIS. He also accused the Russian leader of being 'the most dangerous man in the world'.

Asked why he had issued such a stark warning, the political activist said that Putin 'plays poker while the rest of the world plays chess', warning that the Russian president's actions showed he had a tendency to try to call the world's bluff.

He said Putin's next gamble would be to threaten to cut gas supplies to Europe and the former Soviet republics before the winter. Kasparov believes that the threat will be more than enough to force America and Europe to back down from their recent round of sanctions.

And he attacked President Barack Obama for being too late in checking Putin's actions in Ukraine that eventually led to Russia annexing Crimea. Kasparov also slated European leaders, claiming that indifference to Putin's actions was similar to the complacency shown by leaders in the build-up to World War Two.



Garry Kasparov

Armed man boarded elevator with Obama

AGENCIES

An armed man rode in an elevator with President Barack Obama during a Sept 16 visit to the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, violating Secret Service protocols that state only agents and officers for the agency should be armed around the president, a senior law enforcement official said.

The episode in Atlanta was made public just hours after Julia Pierson, the director of the Secret Service, defended her agency on Capitol Hill as angry lawmakers demanded explanations for a string of embarrassing incidents and security lapses in recent months.

Details of the incident at the CDC remained unclear, but the official said a contract security guard who provided protection for high-profile visitors was on hand for the president's visit and managed to get on an elevator with Obama and his security detail.

The official said that the security contractor was not screened by a magnetometer as he should have been before being allowed close contact with the president.

Kissinger planned to attack Cuba: Report

NEW YORK TIMES ONLINE

Nearly 40 years ago, US Secretary of State Henry A Kissinger mapped out secret contingency plans to launch airstrikes against Havana and "smash Cuba," newly disclosed government documents show.

Kissinger, who was secretary of state from 1973 to 1977, was so irked by Cuba's military incursion into Angola that in 1976 he convened a top-secret group of senior officials to work out possible retaliatory measures in case Cuba deployed forces to other African nations, according to documents declassified by the Gerald R Ford Presidential Library at the of a research group.

The officials outlined plans to strike ports and military installations in Cuba and to send Marine battalions to the United States Navy base at Guantanamo Bay to "lobber" the Cubans, as Kissinger put it, according to the records. Kissinger, the documents show, worried that the United States would look weak if it did not stand up to a country of just eight million people.

"I think sooner or later we are going to have to crack the Cubans," Kissinger told President Ford at a meeting in the Oval Office in 1976, according to a transcript.

The plans suggest that Kissinger was prepared after the 1976 presidential election to recommend an attack on Cuba, but the idea went nowhere because Jimmy Carter won the election, it said. Kissinger, now 91, declined a request to comment.

Norway best place to grow old

AFP, London

Norway is the best place to grow old, according to the latest Global AgeWatch index of 96 countries published yesterday, while Afghanistan is the worst.

All but one of the top 10 countries are in Western Europe, North America and Australasia, with Japan the exception at ninth place, according to the ranking which comprises 91 percent of the global population over the age of 60.

Norway tops the index, pushing last year's number one Sweden into second place in the second year the index has been released.

Unsurprisingly, African countries make up half of the lowest quarter of the index, although Venezuela, Turkey and Serbia are ranked 76th, 77th and 74th respectively.

HelpAge International, the charity which compiled the list, said economic growth in itself was not enough to improve the lives of older people. "Specific policies need to be put in place to address the implications of ageing," said the report, published on the United Nations International Day of Older Persons.

"Policies on income security in Mexico (30) have lifted it 26 places in the overall rankings since last year despite being less wealthy than Turkey (77)."

The index is based on 13 indicators grouped into four areas: income security; health status; capability, which includes employment and educational status; and the enabling environment, including issues such as physical safety.

Some countries fare better than others in different areas. Japan tops the rankings when it comes to health, while Switzerland has the best environment for older people.