

17 US states sue Obama

AFP, Los Angeles

Texas led a group of 17 US states Wednesday in suing President Barack Obama's administration over its plan to offer up to five million undocumented migrant's protection from deportation.

Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott said Obama's unilateral immigration reform plans, unveiled last month to bypass Congressional gridlock by Republicans, "tramples" on the US constitution.

"The president is abdicateing his responsibility to faithfully enforce laws that were duly enacted by Congress and attempting to rewrite immigration laws, which he has no authority to do," Abbott, who filed the lawsuit, said in a statement.

He said Obama's move "tramples the US Constitution's Take Care Clause," which limits the president's power and ensures he will faithfully execute Congress's laws -- "not rewrite them under the guise of 'prosecutorial discretion.'"

Obama's controversial overhaul provides three-year relief for millions of undocumented people who have lived in the country for more than five years and have children that are US citizens or legal residents.

According to the president, it also channels more resources to the US border with Mexico and shifts deportation priorities toward expelling felons.



These pictures show demonstrators protest New York grand jury's decision not to indict a police officerinvolved in the chokehold death of Eric Garner (marked) in July 17 in New York City. National civil rights leaders were to release a longer-term "2015 action plan" later yesterday to address excessive force by law enforcement and police accountability. (Story on page 20)



PHOTO: AFP

Putin defends his foreign policy

Accuses foes of trying to dismember his country

AGENCIES

In an annual speech ranging from economy to school tests, Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday defended the Kremlin's aggressive foreign policy as necessary for his country's sheer survival.

Putin also accused Russia's enemies of seeking to carve it up and destroy its economy to punish it for growing strong. He described Russia as in serious danger, surrounded by enemies who sought its destruction.

Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimean peninsula in March following the ouster of Pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich and was later accused of supplying pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine in ammunition and manpower.

Putin in his annual state-of-the-nation address at the Grand Kremlin Palace defended the annexation of Crimea, describing it as Russia's spiritual ground, "our Temple Mount," and added that national pride and sovereignty are "a necessary condition for survival" of Russia.

Russia's "enemies of yesterday" wished on it the same fate as Yugoslavia in the 1990s, he said in the speech, which ran for more than an hour and was interrupted repeatedly by applause.

"There is no doubt they would have loved to see the Yugoslavia scenario of collapse and dismemberment for us -- with all the

tragic consequences it would have for the peoples of Russia. This has not happened. We did not allow it," he said.

So determined was the West to destroy Russia, he said, that sanctions would have been imposed even without the crisis in Ukraine.

"I am certain that if all this did not take place... they would come up with another reason to contain Russia's growing capabilities," he said.

He said Russia was justified in intervening in Ukraine because the West had supported a "coup" in Kiev.

"How can one support an armed seizure of power, violence, murder?... How can one support the attempts that followed to suppress with the help of armed forces the people in the southeast who did not agree with this lawlessness? ... This is pure cynicism."

Meanwhile, the Ukraine crisis was to take centre stage yesterday at a meeting of top diplomats from OSCE nations after US President Barack Obama said Moscow was unlikely to shift its stance until sanctions really hurt.

Ahead of the meeting, US Secretary of State John Kerry urged Moscow to help halt the raging Ukraine crisis saying Washington does not want to see Russia isolate itself "through its own actions".

Ukraine's military yesterday said it was fighting more than 30,000 rebel soldiers in the east of the country -- including up to 10,000 Russians and mercenaries.

Orion: the 1st step in man's journey to Mars

Specifications:

- Mass:21.3 tonnes
- Max speed:32,187 kph
- Diameter: 5.03m
- Habitable volume: 8.95m³
- Capacity: 4-6 astronauts
- Can be reused 10 times

Missions:

- Inhabited flight beyond low-Earth orbit
- Flights to International Space Station

Launcher:Space Launch System
Manufacturers:Astrium, Lockheed Martin

Sources: Nasa, ESA
*Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle

AFP

Nasa's Mars ship set for test flight

AFP, Cape Canaveral

The first test launch of NASA's new deep space capsule, Orion, was postponed until today due to wind gusts and technical issues with the rocket, the US space agency said yesterday.

After multiple aborts in the nearly three-hour launch window yesterday, Nasa decided to try again today beginning at 7:05am from Cape Canaveral, Florida for the capsule, which is meant to carry humans to an asteroid or Mars in the coming years.

Tourists and space enthusiasts lined the area known as Florida's Space Coast to see the take-off of the Delta IV Heavy rocket powered by three boosters, and 27,000

guests were at the Kennedy Space Center for a close-up look.

The capsule's four-and-a-half hour test flight is due to carry the spacecraft around the Earth twice before splashing down in the Pacific Ocean.

The launch is the first of a US spacecraft meant to carry people into deep space in more than four decades, since the Apollo missions that brought men to the Moon.

Potential future missions for Orion, which can fit four people at a time, include a trip to lasso an asteroid and a journey to Mars by the 2030s.

Another unmanned test flight is slated for 2018. The first Orion test flight with people on board is scheduled for 2021.

20 killed in Islamist attack in Chechnya

AFP, Grozny

Islamist insurgents yesterday launched a brazen attack in the Chechen capital Grozny that sparked heavy clashes with security forces, leaving 20 dead and a central market burnt.

Militants barricaded themselves in a school and police cordoned off city streets in violence that erupted just as President Vladimir Putin gave his annual address to the nation, vowing to end violence in Chechnya.

Putin has pledged to wipe out the insurgency in the North Caucasus but simmering violence has continued in Chechnya and nearby regions, with a suicide blast rocking Chechnya in October.

Putin blamed "terrorists" for the attack and described the police who lost their lives as "real heroes."

The Caucasus Emirate, an Islamist group that has claimed responsibility for a string of deadly attacks, said it was behind the violence in a video posted on the website Kavkaz Center, saying it was revenge for "oppression of Muslim women."

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov told Putin in a televised meeting that 10 militants were killed after several hours of fighting that saw armed personnel carriers drive into residential areas and shooting in the streets.

Yemen's Qaeda threatens to kill US hostage

AFP, Dubai

Al-Qaeda in Yemen released a video yesterday threatening to execute a US journalist taken hostage last year.

In the video dated December 2014, the hostage said his name was Luke Somers, 33, and that he was kidnapped more than a year ago in Sanaa.

The photojournalist was kidnapped in the Yemeni capital in September 2013, US-based monitoring agency SITE Intelligence said.

The video featured a message threatening to kill the hostage in three days if Washington failed to meet unspecified demands.

FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF MANDELA 'It's like he is never gone'

AFP, Johannesburg

One year after the death of former president and Nobel peace laureate Nelson Mandela, South Africans are remembering his life through prayer, walks -- and cricket.

Official commemorations on the anniversary today include an interfaith prayer service in Pretoria led by Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa and the laying of a wreath by veterans from the country's struggle against apartheid.

"Although Nelson Mandela is no longer physically with us his legacy remains to guide us," said his one-time jailer FW de Klerk in just one of many statements to mark the anniversary.

On Friday, bells, hooters, vuvuzelas and sirens will chime, honk, blow and wail for three minutes and seven seconds -- followed by three minutes of silence: a six-minute and seven-second dedication to Mandela's 67 years of public service.

At the weekend, poets will recite, musicians play, and bikers ride in honour of the anti-apartheid icon who died on December 5 last year after a lengthy battle with illness.

Commemorative walks will be walked and marathons run and South Africa's



national cricket and rugby teams will even battle it out in a friendly cricket match that's been billed the Nelson Mandela Legacy Cup.

A year after his death, Mandela lives on in the public imagination of the "Rainbow Nation" he forged from the darkness of apartheid.

At the Apartheid Museum, foreign and local visitors poured over an array of images and artefacts forming part of an exhibition honouring the founding father of a democratic South Africa.

They paused to listen to his speeches, his unique voice thundering within a maze of displays taking visitors through his childhood, his early political life, his imprisonment and his presidency.

"It's very emotional to stand here and hear his voice, and see his face," said Dutch tourist Jurgen Swartz.

"It's like he is never gone."

When unveiled in 2008, the display was temporary - a celebration of Mandela's 90th birthday. Public interest has made it a permanent feature.

"People can't get enough of Mandela, there is always an interest," said curator Emilia Potenza. "Especially now that he is gone."

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Written Test for the post of Probationary Officer /Trainee Officer

Written test for the post of Probationary Officer/Trainee Officer of the Bank will be held on Friday, the 19th December, 2014 at Eden Mohila College, Azimpur, Dhaka from 3.00 P.M. to 4.30 P.M. Candidates are advised to visit Bank's website: www.siblb.com to print out the uploaded Admit Cards. The same need to be produced at the Examination Hall. It is mentionable here that only shortlisted candidates are selected for issuance of Admit Card. For any query, please contact with Human Resources Division through our IP Phone Hunting numbers- 09612001122, Ext-50241-50246.

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