## Ghani urges clerics to help halt attacks

AFP, Kabul

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani yesterday called for Muslim clerics and tribal elders to help stem a surge in deadly insurgent attacks that have rocked the country as US-led troops end their war against the Taliban.

Afghanistan has been hit by weeks of regular attacks, with at least 12 suicide bombs in Kabul alone in the last month.

#### Delhi HC refuses to ban astrology-based TV shows

THE HINDU ONLINE

The Delhi High Court has refused to prohibit astrology-based shows on television while saying it was not in its domain to prescribe what the programming code should be.

A division bench of Chief Justice G Rohini and Justice R S Endlaw, which was hearing a petition filed by NGO Sai Lok Kalyan Sanstha, said since there was already a regulatory mechanism in place, thus any direction in this regard is not required.

## Mauritius names new PM Anerood Jugnauth

AFP, Port Louis



Anerood Jugnauth as prime minister, after the 84-year old won a landslide victory taking nearly three-quarters of seats in parliament.

Jugnauth, a former president and prime minister, was handed his letter of appointment at a meeting at State House yesterday.

## Haiti's PM resigns amid political crisis

AFP, Port-au-prince

Haiti's Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe announced his resignation yesterday, following repeated calls for him to step down amid antigovernment protests and a political crisis in the impoverished Caribbean nation.

had been widely expected after President Michel Martelly said Friday that the prime minister was ready to leave "to help find a solution" to the country's political impasse.

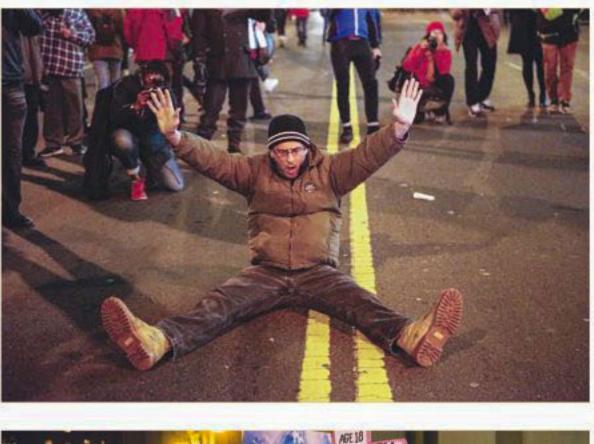
Lamothe's resignation

### Death toll rises to 32 in Indonesian landslide

AFP, Jemblung

Rescuers searching for more than 70 people missing after a landslide in Indonesia deployed bulldozers and excavators to clear roads strewn with debris as the death toll from the disaster rose to 32 yesterday.







Clockwise from left: Demonstrators stage a die-in along the Magnificent Mile shopping district on Michigan Avenue to protest police abuse in Chicago, Illinois on Saturday. A man blocks a street in Union Square in New York City. Frank Graham (C), father of Ramarley Gragam, who was shot and killed by police officers in New York in 2012, speaks outside the New York Police Department Headquarters.

AFP, London

The news comes amid

growing questions in Britain

about whether its intelli-

CIA using brutal and

unauthorised tactics.

Defence Secretary

Michael Fallon said key

figures in Britain's Labour

government including for-

mer PM Tony Blair should

face questions on the issue.

Malcolm Rifkind, the chair-

Intelligence and Security

Committee, said it would

ask for access to secret parts

man of parliament's

of the US report.

gence services made use of

information extracted by the

INTERNATIONAL

PHOTO:

# Islamic State storms town in western Iraq

Kills 19 policemen; Kurdish forces kill 16 jihadists in Syria

REUTERS, Baghdad

Islamic State fighters stormed a town in Iraq's western Anbar province on Saturday, killing at least 19 policemen and trapping others inside their headquarters, in the latest attack in the desert region where it controls large amounts of territory, officials said.

Islamic State seized the town of al-Wafa, 45 km west of Anbar's capital Ramadi on Saturday after starting its assault early on Friday.

With the capture of al-Wafa, Islamic State now controls three major towns to the west of Ramadi, including Hit and Kubaisa. Islamic State and government forces have been bogged down in a months-long battle for Ramadi.

Meanwhile, Kurdish forces killed at least 16 Islamic State group fighters in an attack on Saturday in northeast Syria near the border with Turkey, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

The assault targeted ISIS positions south of the town of Ras al-Ain in Hasakeh province, the Britain-based monitoring group added.

Ras al-Ain was the scene of fierce fighting last year before Kurdish forces ousted the jihadists from the border town.

Al-Wafa fell in a surprise attack that drew

fresh attention to the Iraqi government's struggle to arm Sunni tribes in western Iraq who are fighting Islamic State. "Police forces have been fighting Islamic

State fighters since Friday, but lack of ammunition forced it to retreat and losing the town. I'm frustrated because we were left alone without support," said Hussain Kassar, the town's mayor. Police forces backed by few members of

government-paid Sunni tribal fighters tried to prevent the militants from crossing the sand barrier surrounding the town, but were overwhelmed when sleeper cells from inside open fired on them, the mayor and a police officer said.

Police forces and the pro-government Sunni fighters were forced to retreat to a nearby police-brigade headquarters bordering their town.

#### CIA TORTURE REPORT Mann Ki Baat UK MPs want PM Modi wants access to drug-free India redacted parts

THE HINDU ONLINE

A parliamentary committee investigating possible Voicing concern over the "devastating" drug addiction British links to torture will menace, Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday said request access to blacked society as well as the government will have to work together out parts of a US Senate to fight this problem and that a helpline would be set up report on CIA treatment of soon to assist those seeking solutions. Al-Qaeda suspects, its In his third Mann Ki Baat programme on radio, he said the chairman said yesterday. menace is a "national pain" but instead of the youth mired in

> the problem, drugs should be shunned. He said drug addiction is "a malaise filled 3D - darkness, destruction and devastation — as it leads to the dark alleys of destruction and devastation".

The Prime Minister said a thinking process should begin to ensure that the country is rid of this problem and added that he will try to involve celebrities from the cine world, sports and other fields to campaign for a "drug-free India".

"For long, I have been having concern about the young generation...That some son has got caught in such a quagmire where everything is devastated. Drugs are such a devastation," Modi said in his broadcast to the nation.

At the same time, he said, "drug addiction is bad, not the child." Describing it as a psycho-socio-medical problem, he said the family, friends, society, government and the law will have to work together to fight it as working in pieces will not help.



## Netanyahu rejects withdrawal talk

AFP, Jerusalem

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday rejected talk of Israel withdrawing from east Jerusalem and the West Bank within two years, on the eve of a meeting with the top US diplomat.

"We... stand against the possibility of a diplomatic assault, that is an attempt to compel us by means of UN decisions to withdraw to the 1967 lines within two years," said Netanyahu.

The Jewish state seized east Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank during the 1967 Six-Day War. It pulled out of Gaza in 2005.

Netanyahu said such a

withdrawal now would bring "Islamic extremists to the suburbs of Tel Aviv and to the heart of Jerusalem." Speaking ahead of the weekly meeting of his cabinet, he said he would raise

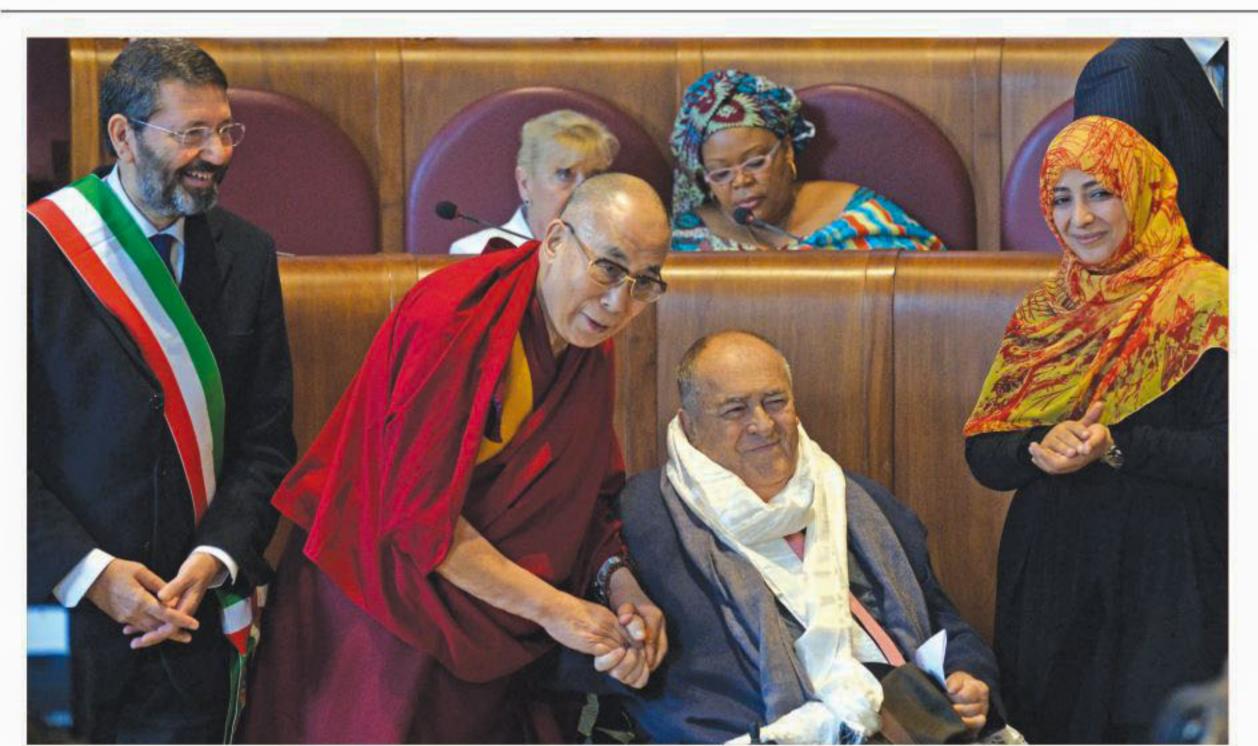
the issue in Rome with US Secretary of State John Kerry and Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi on Monday. "I will tell them that Israel, to a large degree, stands as a solitary island against the waves of Islamic

over the entire Middle East, the Israeli premier said. "Until now we have successfully withstood and repelled these attacks."

extremism that are washing

The Palestinian leadership plans to submit a draft resolution to the UN Security Council demanding the end of Israel's occupation by November 2016.

The Arab League has backed the text, but it ran into opposition from the United States, which has repeatedly vetoed resolutions seen as undermining Israel.



Italian director Bernardo Bertolucci (C) poses with Rome 's Mayor Ignazio Marino (L) after he received the Peace Summit Award from Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama and Nobel Peace Prize co-winner Yemen's Arab Spring activist Tawakkul Karman at the end of the 14th World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates yesterday at Rome's City Hall.

PHOTO: AFP

### JAPAN POLLS

# Abe re-elected easily despite low turnout

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe won comfortable re-election yesterday in a snap poll he had billed as a referendum on his economic policies after early success faded into a recession.

But a low turnout from unenthusiastic voters beset by a heavy snowfall across much of the country could cast doubt on the endorsement he will claim for "Abenomics" -- his signature plan to fix the country's flaccid economy. Media exit polls shortly after

voting finished showed his ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and its junior partner Komeito had swept the ballot, with an unassailable two-thirds majority in the lower house of parliament that will give them the power to override the upper house.

TV Asahi said the pairing had won 333 of

The online version of the respected Nikkei newspaper said the LDP alone had won between 290 and 310 seats, and was "on course to secure the two thirds (317 seats) in the chamber with coalition partner

Komeito".

"This victory will enhance Abe's political capital and allow him to tackle tough issues more comfortably," said Yoshinobu Yamamoto, professor of politics at the University of Niigata Prefecture.

Abe, 60, was only halfway through his four-year term when he called the vote last month.

The first two of his "three arrows" of Abenomics -- monetary easing and fiscal stimulus -- have largely hit their targets; the once-painfully high yen has plunged, giving exporters a boost, and stocks have risen dramatically.

## US citizen enters North Korea

Slams US govt

AFP, Seoul

A US citizen who said he had crossed illegally into North Korea held a press conference in Pyongyang yesterday to denounce his own country's US political and economic systems.

Pierre Martinez, aged 29 and from El Paso in Texas, CNN and the North's official KCNA news agency reported.

The man identified himself as Arturo

He entered the North from China in November, according to a North Korean statement cited by the broadcaster, just two days after the US spy chief James Clapper arrived in Pyongyang to secure

the release of two other detained Americans. Martinez had earlier tried to swim across the Han river between the two Koreas to enter the North, only to be caught and sent back to the US where he was placed in a psychiatric hospital, his mother told CNN.

"But he got out," Patricia Eugenia Martinez said, adding her son was bipolar.

"He...got the court to let him out and instead of coming home to us he bought a ticket and left for China," she said. At the press conference Martinez admitted the illegal entry but said he was "extremely grateful" for the North to have pardoned him and to have offered him "the most generous reception", according to KCNA.

The North aired the criticisms by Martinez of his own government at a time when Pyongyang is under growing international pressure to improve its human rights record.

## Turkish police raid It's a watered-down media offices

AFP, Istanbul

Turkish police yesterday launched a sweeping operation to arrest dozens of supporters of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's rival, US-exiled imam Fethullah Gulen, including a raid on the offices of the Zaman daily, which is close to the cleric.

The police also detained the editor of the

daily Ekrem Dumanli. The operation came just two days after Erdogan signalled a new crackdown against the "evil forces" of Gulen, whom the president accused of orchestrating a corruption probe a

year ago against members of his inner circle. Police conducted raids in several cities across Turkey, including Istanbul, and detained at least 24 people including a top executive of a television channel close to Gulen, as well as a director, producers and scriptwriters, state-run Anatolia news agency said.

Arrest warrants were issued for a total of 32 people, including Ekrem Dumanli, the chief editor of Zaman, the country's topselling newspaper. Erdogan said Friday he would "pursue

them (Gulen supporters) in their lairs".

"We are not just faced with a simple network, but one which is a pawn of evil forces at home and abroad," he said. "We will go into their lairs again. Whoever is beside them and behind them, we will bring down this network and bring it to account."

compromise

Say green groups on Lima climate deal

LIMA COP20 CMP10

AFP, Lima

A carbon-curbing deal struck in Lima yesterday was a watered-down

compromise where national intransigence threatened the goal of a pact to save Earth's climate system, green groups said.

The hard-fought agreement sets out guidelines for the submission of national greenhouse-gas pledges next year.

But, the groups said, initially ambitious standards became weaker the longer the talks wound on.

In a tug-of-war between rich and developing nation interests, the end result was a "lackluster plan with little scientific relevancy," said WWF's

potentially the hottest year ever

recorded, governments at the UN

climate expert, Samantha Smith. "Against the backdrop of extreme weather in the Philippines and

climate talks in Lima opted for a half-baked plan to cut emissions," she added. NGOs and developing nations

alike had hoped the agreement would compel rich countries to

> include information in their pledges on climate adaptation and other financial help. They had also sought a robust assessment of

the pledges' aggregate effect and a mechanism for ramping up contributions, if they were judged inadequate to meet the UN goal of

limiting global warming to two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) over pre-industrial levels. But expectations were mostly

disappointed. The talks, which spilled more than 30 hours into overtime, got bogged down early on in a fight over "differentiation" -- how to divide responsibility for carbon cuts between rich and poor nations.



## Google marks Raj Kapoor's birthday

TNN, New Delhi

The internet giant Google was celebrating legendary Indian film actor Raj Kapoor's 90th birthday by dedicating a doodle yesterday. •The doodle shows Bollywood's 'Show Man' in his avatar from 1951 classic 'Awara', carrying a Google placard on his shoulder.

Donning a hat, jacket and a shirt inside, the the Google homepage shows Raj Kapoor in his most iconic role as Raj in "Shree 420" (1955). His fans will instantly connect with the background of the doodle that depicts the movie's popular song "Pyar hua igrar hua', which features the legend standing under an umbrella with co-star Nargis.

Born on December 14, 1924 Raj kapoor was the winner of two National Fiim Awards and nine Filmfare awards. Known as Showman, the legendary actor is mostly remembered for his role in the movies like Shree 420, Awara, Mera Naam Joker, Jis Desh Mein Ganga Behti Hai and many others.