

# World rallies with Paris in solidarity

AFP, Brussels

Tens of thousands of people rallied worldwide in solidarity with France yesterday, with marchers across Europe and the Middle East chanting "Je suis Charlie" and holding pens in the air.

From Berlin to London and Jerusalem to Beirut, crowds waved French flags and sang the anthem La Marseillaise following the Islamist attacks that killed 17 people.

Christians, Muslims and Jews alike took part in the rallies, held as around 2.5 million people took to the streets in unity marches in France.

In Israel, where four French Jews killed in a Paris supermarket attack will be buried, more than 500 people gathered in Jerusalem in front of a screen reading in French "Jerusalem is Charlie".

Dozens of Palestinians also held a rally in the West Bank city of Ramallah, waving Palestinian and French flags and holding up banners reading "Palestine stands with France against terrorism".

In Europe, large rallies were held in Montreal, Berlin, Brussels, London, Madrid, Vienna, Stockholm, Dublin, Luxembourg, Rome, Milan and Lisbon.

Hundreds of people also marched in Istanbul, Ankara, Beirut, Tokyo and Sydney.



## UNITY MARCH IN PARIS

These pictures were taken during a unity rally "Marche Republicaine" in Paris yesterday in tribute to the victims of a three-day killing spree by homegrown Islamists. As many as 1.5 million people, including dozens of head of states, flooded Paris yesterday in a historic show of solidarity and defiance after terrorist attacks in the French capital that claimed 17 lives. (Story on page 16)

PHOTO: AFP



## NEWS IN brief

### Terrorism killed 7,655 in Pakistan in 2014

PTI, Islamabad

Over 7,500 deaths were recorded in Pakistan last year due to terrorism, militant attacks, drone strikes, sectarian violence, targeted killings and security operations, according to a report. The largest contributor for the total 7,655 deaths in 2014, compared to 5,687 similar fatalities in 2013, was security operations which saw a three fold increase. While the fatalities from the militant attacks, terrorism and targeted killings decreased by 15 per cent.

### Extreme cold kills 3 small girls in Syria

AFP, Beirut

Three small girls and an elderly man have died in Syria in the past 24 hours due to bitterly cold temperatures and a week-long storm, a monitoring group said yesterday. Since last Wednesday, six people have died across Syria as a result of freezing temperatures. All the deaths are reported in opposition held territories.

### Sirisena to visit India first

THE HINDU ONLINE

Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena will travel to New Delhi next month on his first State visit abroad. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited Sirisena when he called to congratulate the latter on his election victory on Friday. Sri Lanka's relations with India are set to improve because the new government recognised the importance of having India on its side, Senaratne said at a press conference here Saturday.

### British PM to visit US next week

REUTERS, London

British Prime Minister David Cameron will have meetings with President Barack Obama next week during a two-day visit to Washington, the White House said on Saturday. Topics for discussion will include trade and the economy, cybersecurity, Iran, counterterrorism and Islamic State, Ebola, and Russia's actions in Ukraine, the statement added.

# 'Coup averted in Sri Lanka'

## New govt says Rajapaksa had other plans than peaceful transition

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's new government yesterday accused toppled strongman Mahinda Rajapakse of having tried to stage a coup to cling to power after losing last week's presidential election.

Rajapakse, South Asia's longest-serving leader before being beaten in Thursday's polls, had been widely praised for conceding defeat to Maithripala Sirisena before the final results were announced.

But a top aide to Sirisena told reporters that Rajapakse had in fact tried to persuade the army and police chiefs to help him stay in office with the use of force.

"People think it was a peaceful transition. It was anything but," Mangala Samaraweera, who is expected to be named as Sirisena's foreign minister, told a press conference.

"The first thing the new cabinet will investigate is the coup and conspiracy by president Rajapakse.

"He stepped down only when the army chief and the police Inspector General (N.K. Illangakoon) refused to go along with him."

Illangakoon was "very vocal and did not want to be a party to this coup" while army chief Daya Ratnayake also refused to deploy



troops for Rajapakse to hold onto power, said Samaraweera.

The attorney general's department had also warned that there would be "dangerous consequences," he said.

Samaraweera said foreign powers had also put pressure on Rajapakse, who came in for international criticism during his near-

decade in office over his administration's human rights record, to cede office.

Critics have also accused the former president of increasing authoritarianism and a culture of nepotism and corruption.

"Some world leaders also spoke with president Rajapakse and prevailed on him to ensure a peaceful transition," Samaraweera said.

US Secretary of State John Kerry and even Sirisena himself thanked Rajapakse for quitting in the early hours of Friday, after his defeat in an election he had seemed certain to win when he called it in November.

The head of the army was not immediately available for comment, but military spokesman Ruwan Wanigasooriya said he was "not aware of such a coup attempt".

Samaraweera said it was important for the new administration to disclose what had happened while results were being released, and an independent investigation probe would be a priority.

# German paper attacked over Charlie Hebdo toons

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Arsonists have firebombed the offices of a German newspaper which printed cartoons from the French magazine Charlie Hebdo, police in Hamburg said.

The Hamburger Morgenpost had, like many German media outlets, published images from the satirical weekly in the aftermath of a terror attack that saw 10 of its journalists killed on Wednesday.

Police said rocks were thrown through the cellar windows of the building in the early yesterday, followed by an "incendiary device".

The fire was put out "quickly", police said, and while two rooms were damaged and some files were burned, no one was injured in the incident.

In an article on its website on Sunday, the newspaper said it was "too soon" to determine whether there was a link between the arson attempt and the attacks in Paris on Wednesday.

"Thick smoke is still hanging in the air, the police are looking for clues," it said.

Two people have been arrested on suspicion of carrying out the attack after they were seen behaving in "an unusual manner" near the scene of the crime, according to a spokesperson for Hamburg police.

The incident came after a meeting in Hamburg on Saturday of Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU).

Speaking in the city, the German Chancellor said: "We have made clear that the events in France, this barbaric terrorist act, are a challenge for all of us, for the values that we advocate, to fight for them." She called on people to be clear on the differences between Islam and religious fanaticism.

# Plane's black boxes found

AFP, Pangkalan Bun

Indonesian divers yesterday found the crucial black box flight recorders of the AirAsia plane that crashed in the Java Sea a fortnight ago with 162 people aboard, the transport ministry said.

But they failed to retrieve it immediately from the seabed because it was stuck under debris from the main body of the plane, the ministry added.

"The navy divers in Jayadart state boat have succeeded in finding a very important instrument, the black box of AirAsia QZ8501," said Tonny Budiono, a senior ministry official.

The recorders were at a depth of 30-32 metres, he said in a statement.

Divers will try to shift the position of the wreckage to access the black box today.

"However, if this effort fails, then the team will lift part of the main body using the same balloon technique used earlier to lift the tail," Budiono added.

After a frustrating two-week search often hampered by bad weather, officials earlier yesterday raised hopes by reporting that strong ping signals had been detected by three vessels involved in the search.

Those signals were coming from the seabed less than one kilometre from where the tail of the plane was found, Malaysian Navy chief Abdul Aziz Jaafar said in a post on Twitter. Malaysia's Navy is helping in the search.

The Indonesian meteorological agency has said stormy weather likely caused the Airbus A320-200 to crash as it flew from the Indonesian city of Surabaya to Singapore on December 28.

But a definitive answer is impossible without the black box, which should contain the pilots' final words as well as various flight data.

SB Supriyadi, a director with the National Search and Rescue Agency, told reporters earlier in the day that an object believed to be the plane's main body had also been detected near the source of the pings.

The search, which has involved US, Chinese and other international naval ships, has recovered 48 bodies so far. Supriyadi said many bodies were believed trapped in the cabin, so reaching that part of the wreckage was also a top priority.

All but seven of those on board the flight were Indonesian.



Indonesian personnel unload a section of recovered wreckage belonging to AirAsia flight QZ8501 onto a truck at port in Kumai, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Bus-tanker crash kills 62 in Pakistan

AFP, Karachi

At least 62 people including women and children were killed early yesterday in southern Pakistan when their bus collided with an oil tanker, starting a fierce blaze which left victims burnt beyond recognition.

Initial reports said the tanker was travelling on the wrong side of the road along a dilapidated stretch of highway, police said.

Authorities transferred the remains to a local morgue after taking samples for DNA testing in order to identify them.

Doctor Semi Jamali at Karachi's Jinnah hospital said another four passengers with minor injuries have been discharged.

# UN chief urges India to curb carbon emissions

PTI, Gandhinagar

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon yesterday asked India to set an ambitious target to cut down carbon emissions, saying it is in a unique position to lead sustainability, energy efficiency and fight against climate change.

"India should come out with an ambitious target to cut down carbon emissions," he said addressing the 'Vibrant Gujarat Summit' at Mahatma Mandir.

His call came after the recent announcement by China and the US to cut down carbon emissions and failed climate change talks among various countries during a UN summit in September last year.

Ban, who is attending the Vibrant Gujarat Summit for the first time, started his speech in Gujarati while greeting the audience and said he was glad to be here. This vibrant state is a gateway for the world to do business in India,

he said.

"I wish India will play a full role in this mission for social security, health care and environment," he said.

"2015 is a historic and most important year for the humanity as it could be the time we end poverty, avoid worst impacts of climate change through sustainable development. This is the 70th year of foundation of the United Nations," he said.

"This is the year to achieve millennium development goals — access to energy, eradication of poverty. In December, Paris will hold conference to arrive at a universal and meaningful climate change agreement," he said.

"This will pave the way for inclusive growth and action against climate change. It will provide access to health care and education, find solutions to eradicate poverty, build huge infrastructure, and India will be playing a huge role in it," he said.



# Anita Ekberg, 'Dolce Vita' actress, dies

AFP, Rome

Legendary Swedish actress Anita Ekberg, immortalised by her performance in Federico Fellini's 1960 film "La Dolce Vita", died yesterday near Rome, media reports said. She was 83.

The voluptuous film star, a longtime resident of Italy, died in a hospital outside the Italian capital, according to the website of the daily La Repubblica.

Ekberg is likely to be remembered for a single scene in which she cavorts in Rome's Trevi Fountain, exhibiting her curvaceous charms to an urbane Marcello Mastroianni in Federico Fellini's "La Dolce Vita".

Although born and brought up in Sweden, Ekberg spent most of her adult life abroad, first in the United States, where she quickly emerged as one of a 1950's generation of pin-ups and starlets, and then in Italy, where she died in a hospital outside the capital yesterday.

The film won Fellini the Golden Palm award at the Cannes Film Festival of the same year, and the fountain scene rapidly became one of the most famous images in cinema history.