

Employees of German airline Germanwings lay down candles and flowers for the victims of the Germanwings plane crash in front of the company's headquarters in Cologne, western Germany, yesterday a day after the Airbus A320 coming from Barcelona and heading to Dusseldorf smashed into the French Alps, killing all 150 people on board. PHOTO: AFP



WAR ON ISIS US mulls airstrikes on Tikrit

Washington is considering launching air strikes, possibly within days, to back up Iraqi and Shiite forces battling to recapture Tikrit from the Islamic State jihadist group, US officials said. The statement came Tuesday after an official said the US was already providing reconnaissance support for Iraqi forces there, the first confirmation of American involvement in the operation. Such assistance could help Iraqi forces move forward with their largest operation against IS jihadists to date, which enjoyed initial success but has since stalled into a siege, with the city surrounded but not retaken. A US-led coalition has targeted ISIS with air strikes and provided training and equipment to Iraqi forces, but had not previously announced direct assistance for the Tikrit operation, in which Iran has played a major role. Possible air strikes near Tikrit are "being discussed at a high level" and could be days or weeks away, a US official told AFP. The delicate diplomatic and military aspects of such an option are still being worked out, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Hadi 'flees' as Huthis close in on Aden

Saudi building up military near Yemen border: US

Yemen's leader was rushed to a "secure location" yesterday as rebel forces bore down on his southern stronghold and a warplane attacked his presidential complex, prompting pleas for urgent intervention. Raising the risk that the Middle East's top oil power will be drawn into the worsening Yemeni conflict, US officials said Saudi Arabia was moving heavy military equipment including artillery to areas near its border with Yemen. The escalating turmoil has stoked fears that Yemen -- a front line in the US battle against al-Qaeda -- is teetering on the brink of all-out civil war.

YEMEN CRISIS



- Air raid targets presidential complex
- Shia militia seize Aden airport
- Yemen's defence minister 'captured'

by allied army units seized al-Anad air base yesterday and appeared close to capturing the southern port of Aden from defenders loyal to President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, residents said. The Houthis, supported by heavy armor, are now within 20 km (12 miles) of Aden, sources said. Meanwhile, a top aide of President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi said the Western-backed leader had been taken to a safe haven "within Aden", the southern port city where he fled last month. Earlier a source in the presidential guard said that Hadi had flown overseas, but the aide denied he had left the country. In a major blow to the embattled leader, the Huthis said they had captured his defence minister in their push southwards. Several missiles were fired by an unidentified warplane at Hadi's complex in Aden but missed his residence and hit an abandoned building, a presidential security official said. As the security situation worsened, Aden's international airport suspended operations. Hadi appealed to the UN Security Council on Tuesday to "shoulder its responsibilities... to safeguard Yemen from sliding into more chaos and destruction." Earlier on Monday, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal had warned on Monday that Arab countries might take action "to protect interests from Huthi aggression".

Netanyahu takes U-turn on Palestine

After Obama jibe, he extends 'hand of peace' to Palestinians

Benjamin Netanyahu said Wednesday Israel wants peace with the Palestinians as he was tasked to form a government a week after saying they won't get a state if he is re-elected. "Our hand is held out in peace to our Palestinian neighbours and the people of Israel know that real peace -- and our future -- will only be assured if Israel is strong," he said after his surprise victory in a March 17 election. As the Israeli premier works to build a new coalition government at home, he faces one of the worst confrontations in his stormy relationship with the White House. He has tried to play down declarations he made during his recent victorious election campaign in which he ruled out the creation of a Palestinian state and stigmatized Arab voters. But Obama has not let him off the hook and, after White House leaks accused Israel of spying on US-Iran nuclear talks, he insisted the allies have more tough talking ahead. On Tuesday, US President Barack Obama said that his disagreement with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu represents a substantial policy difference and not a personal vendetta. "The issue is a very clear, substantive challenge," Obama told reporters at a joint White House news conference with Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani. "We believe that two states is the best path forward for Israel's security, for Palestinian aspirations and for regional stability. That's our view and that continues to be our view. And Prime Minister Netanyahu has a different approach." Since Netanyahu's party won Israel's March 17 election, not a day has passed without a US comment -- official or otherwise -- on the implications of his hardline rhetoric. The United States -- a veto-wielding member of the UN Security Council -- has opposed moves at the United Nations to recognize a Palestinian state, saying that must be part of a negotiated peace deal. It has also shielded Israel from often Arab-led UN votes castigating the Jewish state for various actions, including alleged human rights abuses. But now the United States said it would "reassess" its relationship with Israel.



BBC sacks 'Top Gear' Clarkson

The BBC announced yesterday that it was dropping one of its most popular presenters, "Top Gear" host Jeremy Clarkson, after he verbally and physically attacked a producer. "It is with great regret that I have told Jeremy Clarkson today that the BBC will not be renewing his contract," BBC Director-General Tony Hall said in a statement. Clarkson's contract with "Top Gear", which draws more than 350 million viewers around the world, is thought to expire at the end of this month. His departure will have financial implications for the broadcaster, whose commercial arms BBC Worldwide earns around £50 million each year from the show.

BOKO HARAM MENACE Nigeria denies new mass kidnappings

Nigeria's government yesterday denied reports of a mass kidnapping in the country's northeast, as Boko Haram militants flee a four-nation military offensive. "There is no fresh kidnapping in Damasak," Nigeria's national security spokesman Mike Omeri told AFP, referring to the town recently retaken by forces from neighbouring Chad and Niger. Reports suggested that the Islamist militants, who seized the town in Borno state earlier this year, made off with hundreds of children as they fled the troops' advance. BBC reported that 'about 500' children were kidnapped citing local sources. But Omeri said Nigeria had no information about a mass abduction. The militants do have a track record of mass kidnappings, however, including the high-profile abduction of more than 200 schoolgirls in April last year from the Borno town of Chibok. Details about the kidnapping were muddled for weeks by military and official denials of details reported by the affected families. The disputes over what actually happened were finally laid to rest when Boko Haram released a video picturing dozens of the hostages, who were subsequently identified by relatives. Several sources said it was possible, and perhaps even likely, that scores of Boko Haram conscripts were missing, feared kidnapped by the militants across the region. But they denied a specific mass abduction in Damasak, where the Chadian military last week said that about 100 bodies, some of them decapitated, were found in a mass grave. A senior intelligence source in Borno's capital Maiduguri said there was "no iota of truth" to the mass abduction claims.

স্বাধীনতা
আমাদের স্বাধীনতা
মহান স্বাধীনতা দিবসে স্বাধীনতা মুক্তের বীর শহীদের প্রতি আমাদের কৃতজ্ঞ আলাপ

পুবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড
PUBALI BANK LIMITED

www.pubalibangla.com

RAK Ceramics (Bangladesh) Limited
RAK Tower (7th, 8th & 9th Floor), Plot # 1/A, Jasimuddin Avenue, Sector # 3, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka - 1230

PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION

This is for information to all concerned that the Board of Directors of RAK Ceramics (Bangladesh) Limited in its meeting held on March 24, 2015 between 8:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. has approved the audited revised standalone financial statements of the Company for the year ended December 31, 2014. There are grounds not to restate the audited consolidated financial statements of the Company for the year ended 31 December 2014. Hence, the significant features of the financial statements of the Company disclosed on February 03, 2015 based on the audited consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014 shall remain unchanged.

The Board of Directors has also taken the following decisions:

1. Declaration of dividend for the year 2014 @ 25% in cash as recommended by the Board on February 03, 2015 based on the audited consolidated financial statements of the Company for the year ended 31 December 2014 shall remain unchanged.
2. The record date i.e. 'February 17, 2015' fixed by the Board on February 03, 2015 for entitlement of dividend for the year 2014 and attending the 16th Annual General Meeting and the Extraordinary General Meeting of the Company shall remain unchanged.
3. The revised date, time and venue of the 16th Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) shall be as follows:
 - a. Date of the EGM and 16th AGM : April 20, 2015
 - b. Time of the EGM and 16th AGM : 10:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. respectively
 - c. Venue of the EGM and 16th AGM : International Convention City, Bashundhara(Pushpoguscho), Joarshahara, Purbachal Link Road, Khilkhet, Dhaka-1229

By order of the Board of Directors
Sd/-
(Muhammad Shahidul Islam FCS)
Company Secretary

Date: March 24, 2015

স্বাধীনতা
আমাদের স্বাধীনতা
মহান স্বাধীনতা দিবসে স্বাধীনতা মুক্তের বীর শহীদের প্রতি আমাদের কৃতজ্ঞ আলাপ

পুবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড
PUBALI BANK LIMITED

www.pubalibangla.com