

NEWS IN brief

Man shoots, kills self near US Capitol

AFP, Washington
A man shot and killed himself Saturday near the steps of the US Capitol at the height of tourism season in Washington, leading to a short lockdown of the congressional building. Police said the man had a "social justice" protest sign with him when he produced a weapon and shot himself on the western side of the building. The shooting was not terror-

Cuba's terror listing decision soon: Kerry

AFP, Washington
US President Barack Obama will decide in "the next days" whether to remove Cuba from a blacklist of state sponsors of terrorism, top diplomat John Kerry said yesterday. Cuba was first put on the list in 1982 for harboring ETA Basque separatist militants and Colombian FARC rebels. The US and Cuba broke relations in 1961, the year

Brazil leader to visit US in June 30

AFP, Panama City
US President Barack Obama announced Saturday that Brazilian counterpart Dilma Rousseff will visit Washington on June 30, almost two years after she cancelled a trip over a US spying scandal. Obama made the announcement during a bilateral meeting with Rousseff on the sidelines of the Summit of the

Malala has asteroid named after her

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An asteroid orbiting between Mars and Jupiter has been named after Malala Yousafzai. Nasa astronomer Dr Amy Mainzer who discovered it five years ago said she chose the name to honour the 17-year-old Nobel Prize winner. Malala was shot in the head by the Pakistani Taliban in 2012 for cam-

Maoists attack again in Chhattisgarh

TNN, New Delhi
There has been a second Naxal attack in Chhattisgarh, a day after seven personnel of Special Task Force were killed in an ambush. According to Times Now, Naxalites have set 17 vehicles ablaze in Baqrsapur, Bastar. No casualty was

Iran's state TV media accounts hacked

REUTERS, Abu Dhabi
Iran's Arabic-language state TV network Al Alam yesterday said its Twitter account had been hacked and a false report was posted that an Iran-allied rebel leader in Yemen had died. Al Alam has covered the crisis in Yemen since Saudi Arabia and Arab allies launched air strikes against the Shia Houthi move-



ISIS ERASING HISTORY IN IRAQ

This picture shows smoke billowing from an ancient site after it was wired with explosives by Islamic State (ISIS) militant group in northern Iraq. ISIS has released a video showing militants using power tools and bulldozers to deface and destroy ancient monuments in the Assyrian city of Nimrud in northern Iraq, before the site is levelled with explosives. Damage to the site was first reported in March, but the undated video lays bare the full scale of destruction, as the city is completely demolished. ISIS has previously attacked a number of other Assyrian sites in Iraq and destroyed countless manuscripts, books and other artefacts as they are deemed un-Islamic and blasphemous. PHOTO: AFP



ARMENIAN SLAUGHTER BY OTTOMAN TURKS Turkey furious as pope terms killings as genocide

AFP, Vatican City
Pope Francis yesterday uttered the word "genocide" to describe the mass murder of Armenians 100 years ago, sparking fury from Turkey which slammed the term as "far from historical reality". In a solemn mass in Saint Peter's Basilica to mark the centenary of the Ottoman killings of Armenians, Francis said the murders were "widely considered 'the first genocide of the 20th century'," quoting a statement signed by Pope John Paul II and the Armenian patriarch in 2001. Many historians describe the World War I slaughter as the 20th century's first genocide, but Turkey vehemently denies the accusations.



ambassador to the Vatican, Mehmet Pacaci, for consultations. While Francis did not use his own words to describe the killings as genocide, it was the first time the term was spoken aloud in connection with Armenia by a head of the Roman Catholic Church in Saint Peter's Basilica. Armenians say up to 1.5 million of their kin were killed between 1915 and 1917 as the Ottoman Empire was falling apart, and have long sought to win international recognition of the massacres as genocide. But Turkey rejects the claims, arguing that 300,000 to 500,000 Armenians and as many Turks died in civil strife when Armenians rose up against their Ottoman rulers and sided with invading Russian troops. More than 20 nations, including France and Russia, recognise the killings as genocide. The Armenian victims a century ago were Christian and although the killings were not openly driven by religious motives, the pontiff drew comparisons with modern Christian refugees fleeing Islamic militants.

Don't interfere in Iran talks Kerry urges Congress

AFP, Washington
Secretary of State John Kerry yesterday urged US lawmakers to allow talks with Iran on curbing its nuclear program to be completed without interference, amid threats of new sanctions. Kerry is planning to brief lawmakers today and tomorrow about the parameters of the deal reached after eight days of tough bargaining in Switzerland earlier this month. "I'll lay out the facts," Kerry told CBS's "Face the Nation" when asked about a different narrative emerging from Iranian leaders about what was agreed. Congress returns from recess on Monday, it is expected that some lawmakers will push forward with legislation calling for congressional approval of any deal, and possibly threatening to impose more sanctions on Iran.

Pakistan hits out at UAE over Yemen

AFP, Islamabad
Islamabad yesterday hit out at the United Arab Emirates for condemning a parliamentary vote by Pakistani lawmakers to stay out of the conflict in Yemen declining Saudi Arabia's request, in a rare display of discord between the two allies. Anwar Gargash, the UAE's minister of state for foreign affairs, lashed out at Pakistan's vote on his Twitter account Saturday, terming it "contradictory and dangerous and unexpected", and accusing Islamabad of siding with Iran, which is accused of backing the rebels. He added Pakistan's stand would come at a high cost. Pakistan's interior minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan hit back yesterday night in an unusually strongly worded statement, accusing the UAE of "making threats". "This is not only ironic but a thought-provoking moment that a minister of UAE is hurling threats at Pakistan. The statement of the UAE minister is in stark violation of all diplomatic norms prevalent according to the principals of international relations," he said. Pakistan was the first country to recognise the independence of the UAE in 1971. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia yesterday dismissed Iranian calls to end air strikes on neighboring Yemen as Saudi-led attacks hit a military camp in the Yemeni city of Taiz, killing eight civilians according to a medical source. Iran's president Hassan Rouhani on Thursday called for a ceasefire and dialogue among Yemen's factions.

Regime strike on Syria school kills 5

AFP, Beirut
A Syrian regime air strike hit a school in the main northern city of Aleppo yesterday killing five children and four other civilians, a monitoring group said. "Military aircraft struck a school in east Aleppo city and killed five children, three female teachers and one man," said Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. He said a number of people were seriously wounded and the death toll was likely to rise. Another child was killed in an air strike on a rebel-held neighbourhood of east Aleppo, the Britain-based Observatory reported. The strikes come after a day after government forces and rebel fighters exchanged fire in the north-



ern city, leaving at least 35 civilians dead. Many schools in Aleppo city have been forced to close, while others hold classes in basements. Meanwhile, head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees UNRWA Pierre Krahenbuhl yesterday said he was deeply concerned for civilians stuck in a Damascus refugee camp after it was stormed by the extremist Islamic State group.

ISIS attacks S Korea embassy in Libya

Two Libyan guards killed, one injured
AFP, Tripoli
Gunmen killed two people and wounded a third in an attack at the South Korean embassy in the Libyan capital Tripoli on Sunday which was claimed by the Islamic State group. The gunmen opened fire on the embassy compound from a passing car, killing two people and wounding a third, a Libyan interior ministry spokesman told AFP. A security source at the location said the two dead were both Libyan guards, adding that while the embassy had been closed for several months, South Korean officials were continuing to use it. The foreign ministry in Seoul confirmed the attack, saying three South Koreans working in the embassy -- including two diplomats -- were unhurt. It also said two Libyan guards were among the dead. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack on Twitter, according to SITE Intelligence Group. The jihadist group, notorious for its brutal rule of large areas of Iraq and Syria, has established branches in all three of Libya's historic regions. It has claimed responsibility for several high-profile attacks on foreign targets in Libya, including an assault in January on the Corinthia Hotel in Tripoli and the beheading of Egyptian Coptic Christians. Libya has been plagued by chaos since the end of the 2011 revolt that toppled Muammar Gaddafi, with heavily armed militias battling for control of its cities and oil wealth and rival governments and parliaments vying for power. The country has had two governments and parliaments since Tripoli was seized in August by the Islamist-backed Fajr Libya militia and the internationally recognised government fled to the country's far east.



A young child plays with a dog as other children sleep on the side of a road in Manila, yesterday. The world marks International Day for Street Children on April 12 to campaign for the rights of impoverished children. According to a report from the Consortium for Street Children, a United Kingdom-based consortium of related non-governmental organizations, UNICEF estimates that 100 million children are growing up on urban streets around the world. PHOTO: AFP



Cuba's President Raul Castro (L) gestures in response to a reporter's question during a meeting with US President Barack Obama (R) on the sidelines of the Summit of the Americas at the ATLAPA Convention center in Panama City on Friday. Obama arrived home late Saturday, just hours after unprecedented face-to-face talks with Raul Castro and a first meeting with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro. PHOTO: AFP

ISIS ATROCITIES IN IRAQ 9-yr-old Yazidi sex slave raped by 10 jihadists

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK
A nine-year-old girl who was taken as a sex slave by ISIS was raped by 10 militants and is now pregnant, it has been reported. According to an aid worker, the girl is a member of the Yazidi Christian minority religious group, which faces persecution across ISIS-held territory. She has been flown out of Iraq by a Kurdish aid agency, the Toronto Star reported, and is now being treated by a medical charity in Germany. But Yousif Daoud, a Canada-based aid worker who has just returned from the region, told the Star the girl was "mentally and physically traumatised" after the abuse she had suffered, and there are fears she may yet not survive her ordeal. "This girl is so young she could die if she delivers a baby," he said. "Even a caesarian section is dangerous." ISIS released 216 Yazidis on Wednesday after holding them captive for eight months. But Daoud, speaking under a pseudonym, gave a very different reason for Isis to release women and girls who its militants have already abused. He said they faced the stigma of lost chastity among the conservative Yazidi society. "Sending back those girls and women is a way of shaming the whole community."

TERROR SCARE Stampede kills 1, hurts many in Kenya campus

BBC ONLINE
A student died and more than 100 were hurt yesterday in a stampede which followed the explosion of an electricity transformer at a Kenyan university. Residents of Nairobi university's Kikuyu campus mistook the blast for a terrorist attack and jumped out of hostel windows. Tensions are high among students after an Islamist attack on a Kenyan college 10 days ago which left 148 dead. Some avoided using the entrances to their hostels, thinking that al-Shabab militants were occupying them, and jumped from windows, some as high as the 6th floor.

Revoke voting rights of Muslims: Shiv Sena

PTI, Mumbai
Stoking a controversy, the Shiv Sena yesterday demanded that voting rights of Muslims should be revoked as the community has often been used to play vote bank politics. "Vote bank politics is being played in the name of fighting against the injustice meted out to Muslims. Their educational and health status is being used politically. This politics was once played by the Congress and now every other person calls himself secular. "If Muslims are only being used this way to play politics, then they can never develop. Muslims will have no future till they are used to play vote bank politics and thus Balasaheb had once said to withdraw Muslims voting rights. What he said is right," an editorial in Sena mouthpiece 'Saamana' said yesterday. The "secular masks" of all the so-called secular political parties will be worn out, once their voting rights are withdrawn, it said. Taking a dig at AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi for challenging Sena president Uddhav Thackeray to come to Hyderabad, the editorial said, "Owaisi dares us to come to Hyderabad. But we want to ask him if Hyderabad is in India or in Lahore, Karachi or Peshawar. The pride of Marathis is known in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Kandahar as well."