

# NEWSIN brief

## Fire kills 18 migrants at Algeria camp

AFP, Algiers

A fire sparked by an electrical fault killed 18 African migrants, including 2 children, and injured 50 others at a camp in Algeria, officials said yesterday. The blaze began before dawn at the camp housing more than 650 migrants in Ouargla, 800 kilometres southeast of Algiers, Colonel Farouk Achour of the emergency services said.

## 5 injured in US racially motivated shooting

AFP, Washington

Five people were shot and suffered injuries, Minneapolis police said on Twitter yesterday, with local media reporting that the incident occurred at a protest over the fatal shooting by police of a black man. Police said all injuries from the late-Monday incident were not life threatening and tweeted that officers are "searching for 3 white male suspects" who fled the scene.



## Pak female fighter pilot dies in jet crash

BBC ONLINE

A female Pakistani fighter pilot has died after her aircraft crashed in Punjab province. Mariam Mukhtiar was on a routine training mission when her plane met an "in-flight emergency" over Mianwali district, the air force said. She and her co-pilot ejected. She later died from her injuries in hospital. Flying Officer Mukhtiar was one of a small number of women to work as fighter pilots in Pakistan, and the first to die on operational service.

## 5 Myanmar men fined for Rohingya calendar

AFP, Yangon

Five Myanmar men have been fined under a restrictive printing law for publishing a calendar that described the country's persecuted Muslim Rohingya as a recognised ethnic minority, police said Tuesday. The men were arrested over the weekend in Yangon and fined \$800 each on Monday after pleading guilty to an offence that carries up to two years in prison. Myanmar's government does not recognise the term Rohingya.

## Vatican leaks: Five face trial in Holy See

BBC ONLINE

Five people have gone on trial in the Vatican accused of leaking and publishing secret documents revealing mismanagement in the Holy See. Two journalists who cited the documents in two books will face the tribunal, along with two members of a papal commission and an assistant. If convicted, they could be jailed for up to eight years. Media groups have condemned the trial. One of the journalists charged called it "an attack on press freedom".

## US 'clock boy' seeks \$15m compensation

BBC ONLINE

A boy who was arrested for taking a home-made clock to class is seeking \$15m from his city and school. Ahmed Mohamed, 14, was held by police and suspended from his school in Texas because his teacher mistook the clock for a bomb. His lawyer said in a letter that the incident, which made global headlines, sparked threats against the teenager and left him deeply traumatised.



Men carry a Iranian who collapsed yesterday after sewing his lips in protest at not being allowed to continue their journey to Europe at the Greek-Macedonian border near Gevgelija yesterday. At least five migrants stuck on the Greek-Macedonian border on Monday sewed their lips. Syrian, Iraqi and Afghan refugees are allowed through but those deemed economic migrants -- mainly people from Iran, Pakistan and Bangladesh -- are blocked.

PHOTO: AFP

## BANGKOK SHRINE BLAST

# Thai military court indicts 2 Uighurs

AFP, Bangkok

A Thai military court yesterday indicted two Uighurs for a deadly bombing at a Bangkok shrine in August, as the United Nations called on the ruling junta to stop holding civilian suspects in army detention.

Authorities say both Bilal Mohammed, also known as Adem Karadag, and Yusuf Mieraili have admitted to their roles in the unprecedented attack that killed 20 people and wounded scores more.

The pair are currently incarcerated at a controversial detention facility on the 11th Military Circle barracks in Bangkok where two people recently died in custody in circumstances that have yet to be fully explained.

The UN's call came shortly after Mohammed and Mieraili appeared before the capital's military court to hear the charges against them.

"Military prosecutors have decided to indict them on several charges," Withtaya Puangpunngam, chief of military prosecutors, told AFP.

The charges include attempted and premeditated murder, possession of illegal weapons and illegal entry, he said, adding that the accused had "confessed" during earlier police investigations.

The August attack at the Erawan shrine, nestled between plush shopping malls and hotels in a bustling district of central Bangkok, dealt a fresh blow to the nation's image as a holiday paradise.

The capital was already recovering from months of often violent street protests that ended in the May 2014 military coup that toppled an elected government.

Mystery still shrouds the motive for the unclaimed attack, with police still not confirming the nationalities of the suspects.

# US has plan to divide Iraq

## Accuses Iran's supreme leader; pleads with Iraqis to resist such plans

AGENCIES

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei yesterday accused the United States of trying to divide Iraq along sectarian and ethnic lines and urged Iraqis to withstand any such plans.

Shia Muslim power Iran wields great influence in Iraq, which has a majority Shia population. Its military advisers are helping direct Baghdad's campaign against Sunni Islamist militant group Islamic State, which seized around a third of Iraq's territory last year.

It was not clear if Khamenei was referring to a specific incident, but Iran has protested about US policy in Iraq several times this year.

"The Americans must not be allowed to consider Iraq as their personal property ... and dare to openly talk about disintegration of Iraq," Khamenei said according to his website.

"The Iraqi people, Shias, Sunnis, Kurds and Arabs have been living together peacefully but some regional countries and

some foreigners are trying to amplify differences among them," he added.

In August, outgoing US Army chief of staff General Ray Odierno drew condemnation from Baghdad and Tehran when he said reconciliation between

**WAR ON TERROR- DEVELOPMENTS**  
Australia PM calls IS weak, rules out combat troops to fight militants

US warplanes destroy 283 IS fuel trucks in Syria

IS attack on Sinai hotel kills judge, 3 others

Shias and Sunnis in Iraq was becoming harder and that partitioning the country "might be the only solution."

In the instability resulting from the rise of Islamic State, Iraq's Kurds have expanded the reach of their autonomous regional government to include Kirkuk,

which sits on substantial oil deposits.

During a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday, Khamenei called for closer bilateral ties between Tehran and Moscow to thwart what he called "Washington's plots".

Meanwhile, Australia Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull yesterday said the IS group is weak and he has no plans to send combat troops to fight it. His remarks contrasted with former prime minister Tony Abbott's description of IS as a "death cult".

In eastern Syria, US warplanes have destroyed 283 fuel tankers that were being used to transport oil to help fund the Islamic State group, officials said Monday. It came less than a week after another, similar strike destroyed 116 IS fuel trucks.

In Egypt, Islamic State group suicide bombers killed four people, including a judge, in an assault yesterday on a North Sinai hotel hosting judges overseeing Egypt's parliamentary polls, the government and jihadists said.

# 690m children at risk: UN

## Says climate-linked disasters killed 600,000 in 20 yrs

AFP, United Nations

Nearly 690 million of the world's 2.3 billion children live in areas most exposed to climate change, facing higher rates of death, poverty and disease from global warming, the UN children's agency said yesterday.

On Monday, a report from the United Nations agency for disaster risk reduction (Unisdr) said that Weather-related disasters had grown more frequent over the last 20 years, claiming more than 600,000 lives, and issued issue a further call for nations to strike a landmark deal on climate change.

The climate conference opens on November 30 and is due to wrap up on December 11.

The report said floods, storms and other extreme weather events have killed 606,000 people since 1995, "with an additional 4.1 billion people injured, left homeless or in need of emergency assistance."

The report noted that while there was no way to establish how much of the rise in such disasters was caused by climate change, the link between the planet's changing

climate and extreme weather was clear.

Almost 530 million children live in countries hardest-hit by high floods and tropical storms, mostly in Asia.

An additional 160 million kids are growing up in areas suffering severe droughts, mostly in Africa, UNICEF said in the report titled "Unless We Act Now."

US President Barack Obama and China's Xi Jinping are joining more than 147 world leaders in Paris next week for an international conference aimed at clinching the first agreement on tackling global warming in 20 years.

The most urgent task is for world governments to agree on curbing greenhouse gas emissions, said Rees, but action is also needed on the national level to deal with the impact.

Coastal areas in South Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean are among the most vulnerable along with Pacific islands, the Horn of Africa and equatorial Africa.

"Today's children are the least responsible for climate change, but they, and their children, are the ones who will live with its consequences," said Unicef director Anthony Lake.

**PARIS CLIMATE SUMMIT**  
**4 DAYS TO GO**

## SOUTH CHINA SEA ROW

# Hearing begins in Hague court

AFP, The Hague

An international tribunal yesterday began hearing a case brought by the Philippines over disputed islands in the South China Sea, in an increasingly bitter row with China.

The Permanent Court of Arbitration "commenced the hearing on the merits and remaining issues of jurisdiction and admissibility," the Hague-based tribunal said in a statement.

Manila has called for the tribunal, which is more than a century old, to rule on the dispute, appealing to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Beijing claims almost all of the South China Sea, putting it in conflict with several neighbours, and is a party to the Convention but has rejected the court's jurisdiction on the issue.

"Our position is clear: we will not participate to or accept the arbitration," foreign ministry spokesman Hong Lei told a regular briefing earlier yesterday.

The hearing, expected to last until November 30, is being held behind closed doors. But Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam are allowed to have observers present.

Beijing has never precisely defined its claims to the strategic waterway, through which about a third of all the world's traded oil passes.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (R) and US Secretary of State John Kerry shake hands after speaking to the press during a meeting at the Prime Minister's office in Jerusalem yesterday. He later met with Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas in West Bank. Kerry is holding talks with Israeli and Palestinian leaders in a bid to ease a wave of violence that left 92 Palestinians dead as well as 17 Israelis.

PHOTO: AFP

# Aamir's comments spark huge row

STAR REPORT

After Bollywood 'badshah' Shahrukh Khan, superstar Aamir Khan has waded into the debate on perceived "intolerance" saying he felt "alarmed" by such incidents and that his wife Kiran Rao had even wondered if they should move out of India.

The comments have made a huge stir in the Indian political arena, as Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi came out in his support and BJP criticised his remark as unfair.

Khan told a journalism awards ceremony that he was "alarmed" over the rise in acts of intolerance in the "last six to eight months".

Earlier this month fellow superstar Shah Rukh Khan also spoke out against what he called "extreme intolerance" in India.

A movement that began with writers returning state awards has spread to scientists, historians and filmmakers.

They have cited the killing of rationalists MM Kalburgi and Govind Pansare, as well as the lynching of a man over suspicions he consumed beef, as examples of rising intolerance in the country.

Actor, director and producer Khan

told a ceremony organised by The Indian Express newspaper that a sense of "insecurity" and "fear" had been growing in India.

"(Wife) Kiran and I have lived all our lives in India. For the first time, she said, should we move out of India? That's a disastrous and big statement for Kiran to make to me," Khan was quoted as saying by the newspaper.

## 'INTOLERANCE' IN INDIA



"She fears for her child. She fears about what the atmosphere around us will be. She feels scared to open the newspapers everyday. That does indicate that there is a sense of growing disquiet."

Rahul Gandhi yesterday said the government should not "bully or threaten" people who question it as he came out in support of actor Aamir Khan.

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal "admired" Khan for "speaking up" against growing intolerance and insecurity in the country, and asked the Centre to take steps to instill a sense of security among people.

Rahul's support for Aamir came shortly after Union minister Kiren Rijiju said the actor's remark tarnishes the image of India.

BJP later said Rahul's endorsement of remarks on intolerance reeks of a conspiracy to defame India.

"Aamir makes a comment and Rahul Gandhi supports it. It has become clear from Gandhi's comment that there is a conspiracy going on in the country to defame the nation," BJP spokesperson Shahnawaz Hussain said at a press conference in New Delhi.

He questioned Aamir Khan, asking "who is giving you all the advice".

"For the Muslims in India, no other country can be better than India; no neighbours could be better than the Hindus. Wherever you go, apart from India, you will find intolerance," he added.

The Indian government has dismissed the allegations of rising acts of intolerance.

# POWER OUTAGES IN CRIMEA Russia threatens to cut gas to Ukraine

AFP, Simferopol

Power cuts in Crimea affected nearly 940,000 people yesterday as tensions raged between Kiev and Moscow over the annexed peninsula and Russia threatened to cut off gas supplies to Ukraine.

The Black Sea peninsula has been hit by power cuts after unknown attackers blew up pylons at the weekend, cutting power lines from Ukraine, which supplies most of its electricity. Crimea authority blames Ukraine for the outage.

The energy ministry in Moscow said that some 938,000 residents of Crimea remained without electricity and Russia was sending 300 mobile generators to the peninsula.

Energy minister Alexander Novak said Russia may shortly cut natural gas supplies to Ukraine because Kiev had not made an upfront payment and suggested Moscow could also cut coal deliveries.

Russia supplies around a third of Europe's gas, with roughly half of it flowing via Ukraine and has been involved in a festering pricing dispute with Kiev.

Ukraine on Monday halted the movement of goods to Crimea, ratcheting up tensions with Moscow amid a relative lull in fighting in separatist eastern Ukraine that has claimed more than 8,000 lives since April 2014.

Tensions have spiked as Kiev's landmark free-trade agreement with the European Union is set to come into force on January 1, 2016. Russia has vehemently opposed the agreement at the heart of the Ukraine conflict.

## 'WORLD'S WORST EXECUTIONERS'

# Pakistan nears 300th execution in under a year

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan was set to execute a disabled man today as activists said it was nearing its 300th hanging in under a year, and Amnesty International slammed Islamabad for "shamefully sealing its place among the world's worst executioners".

The execution of Abdul Basit, a paraplegic who was convicted of murder in 2009, has already been postponed several times after rights groups raised concerns about how a wheelchair-bound man would mount the scaffold.

A prison official confirmed to AFP that it has been scheduled again for today.

"His family has been informed," the official said on condition of anonymity, adding that a final meeting between Basit and his relatives had been arranged for late yesterday.

Pakistan's Human Rights Commission said it had written to PM Nawaz Sharif seeking to stay the execution.

In a statement yesterday, Amnesty said it had recorded 299 executions in Pakistan since the death penalty was controversially reinstated following a Taliban mass killing at a school in Peshawar last December.

"Pakistan will imminently have executed 300 people since it lifted a moratorium on executions, shamefully sealing its place among the world's worst executioners," the statement said.