



# IMF chief to stand trial over Tapie payout

AFP, Paris

International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde was ordered yesterday to stand trial over her handling of a massive state payout to French tycoon Bernard Tapie when she was finance minister.

Lagarde was placed under formal investigation in 2014 for negligence in a protracted legal drama pitting Tapie against a bank which he accused of defrauding him during his sale of Adidas in the 1990s.

The 59-year-old Frenchwoman was finance minister under former president Nicolas Sarkozy in 2008 when she decided to allow arbitration in the dispute between Tapie and partly state-owned Credit Lyonnais.

The arbitration resulted in Tapie, who had close ties to Sarkozy, being awarded a payout of 403 million euros (\$433 million), which would have to be covered by a state-run body in charge of settling the bank's debts.

French prosecutors in September called for the case against Lagarde to be dropped, however investigating judges decided to send her to trial, a legal source told AFP yesterday.

The negligence charge comes over Lagarde's failure to challenge the award that was hugely beneficial to Tapie but prejudicial to

# 'No reconciliation'

## Putin launches scathing attack on Turkey leadership over jet row

REUTERS, Moscow

Russia's Vladimir Putin subjected Turkey to a furious tirade yesterday, using barrack-room language to wonder aloud whether it had shot down a Russian warplane last month to curry favour with the United States.

Addressing almost 1,400 reporters in a cavernous hall inside a Moscow conference centre, the Russian president dedicated a chunk of his annual news conference to spelling out why he saw no prospect of a rapprochement with Ankara.

"If someone in the Turkish leadership decided to lick the Americans in a particular place I don't know whether they acted correctly or not and I don't know ... whether the Americans needed that," said Putin, referring to the shooting down.

Putin said he could imagine a scenario where there was a deal for Turkey to shoot down a Russian plane in return for Washington turning a blind eye to Turkish troops entering Iraq.

Putin made clear Russian sanctions would stay in place for some time, saying it was hard for the Kremlin to reach any kind of agreement with the



**PUTIN'S ANNUAL NEWS CONFERENCE**  
Admits Russian forces were in Ukraine  
Says Russia wants to develop ties with US whoever wins polls  
Broadly backs US Syria peace plans

current Turkish leadership, whom he accused of "creeping Islamisation" that would have the secular state's founder, Kemal Ataturk, turning in his grave.

Putin, speaking on the eve of a meeting of world powers in New York on Friday to discuss Syria, was more conciliatory towards the United States, saying he broadly supported US plans to try to push forward the Syrian peace process.

Even though differences between Moscow and Washington remained, he said he backed a US plan to prepare a UN resolution on the peace process.

But though he said there was agreement that a new constitution needed

to be drawn up and an election held to determine the fate of the conflict-torn country, he signalled Moscow was not yet ready to withdraw its support for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

"We believe that only the Syrian people can decide who should govern them," said Putin, saying Moscow would continue its air strikes in Syria for as long as the Syrian army continued its own military operations.

Answering a question about Ukraine -- with which relations remained strained over a smouldering conflict in eastern Ukraine and Crimea -- Putin appeared to confirm the presence of Russian special forces in east Ukraine for the first time.

"We never said there were no people there who were carrying out certain tasks including in the military sphere," said Putin.

"But that does not mean there are Russian (regular) troops there, feel the difference," he added, saying he now wanted better ties with Kiev overall.

Putin also said that Russia wanted to develop relations with the United States, irrespective of who will become the next American president.

"We are ready to work with any president, for whom the American

# Donald Trump 'outstanding, talented'

AFP, Moscow

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday described US Republican presidential hopeful Donald Trump as "talented" and "outstanding," welcoming his stance on Russia.

"He is a very outstanding man, unquestionably talented," Putin told journalists after his annual press conference in Moscow.

"It's not up to us to judge his virtue, that is up to US voters, but he is the absolute leader of the presidential race," Putin added.

Asked about the prospect of a new US president during the three-hour news conference, Putin, whose relationship with Barack Obama is strained at best, said "we first have to understand who it is going to be."

"Whoever it is, we are ready and want to develop our relations with the United States," he said.

Trump, a tycoon and one-time reality television star who has unexpectedly become leader of the Republican presidential candidates' race, has gained both fans and enemies recently for inflammatory remarks against Muslims.

"He says that he wants a different level of relations, tighter and deeper relations with Russia, how can we not welcome that? Of course we welcome it," Putin said.

Trump was asked during one of the debates in September what he would do to get Russia's military presence out of Syria, and answered that he would first get Putin's respect.

"I will get along -- I think -- with Putin, and I will get along with others, and we will have a much more stable -- stable world," Trump said in September. "I would talk to him. I would get along with him."

# FIVE YEARS SINCE THE ARAB SPRING

## When dreams fall apart

AL JAZEERA ONLINE

Five years ago, on December 17, Mohamed Bouazizi, a 26-year-old street vendor, set himself on fire outside a local municipal office in his hometown of Sidi Bouzid to protest against police corruption - a solitary act that would set off a stunning chain of events throughout the Arab world.

In the years since Bouazizi's death, Tunisia has gone through tremendous change. After street protests forced President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali into exile after two decades of his rule, Tunisia adopted a new constitution and held national elections in 2014. Earlier this month, the country's National Dialogue Quartet was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for assisting Tunisia's transition to democracy.

But despite the changes that have taken place around them, residents of Sidi Bouzid say their lives are no better than they were before the uprising.

"Before the toppling of the regime of Ben Ali, we had hopes," Ramzi Abdouli, 29, a graduate from Sidi Bouzid, told Al Jazeera. "We thought that maybe when Ben Ali left our



reality would change. Unfortunately, it was not the case." Like many of Tunisia's youth, Abdouli participated in the 2010-2011 protests, hoisting banners against the regime. Even after Ben Ali was deposed, Abdouli marched more than 250km from Sidi Bouzid to Tunis in April 2012 to reiterate demands for social justice and employment.

Today, via social media, he remains a relentless critic of the current government. "The youth now in Sidi Bouzid feel that we have been excluded, ignored and marginalised," he said.

Employment was one of the key demands of protesters during Tunisia's 2010-2011 uprising. But things have gone worse since then.

Due to the overwhelming sense of hopelessness, many Tunisian youths have left the country to join up with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group, Abdouli said - including some of his peers.

"I have heard that some of them died already in Syria; others are jailed there," he said. "They were so youthful, energetic and educated, and when they felt unheard and not taken seriously enough, they decided to leave everything behind and join ISIL."

"Our dreams are falling apart day in and day out... In a country of 12 million, unemployment creates a fertile soil for terrorism, poverty and corruption," Abdouli added. "We have to be serious and the state should shoulder its responsibility."

# EU warns UK over demands

AFP, Brussels

EU leaders yesterday warned Britain over its "unacceptable" reform demands and urged greater unity on the migrant crisis at a summit marking the end of one of the bloc's toughest ever years.

David Cameron was told by Francois Hollande and other top officials in the European Union that his calls for limits to benefits for EU workers in Britain threatened the 28-nation club's core principles.

The British premier vowed to "battle through the night" to make progress towards a deal at the next EU gathering in February, before holding a referendum on Britain's membership by the end of 2017.

But with Europe already deeply split

## TALKS ON 'BREXIT'



by a year that has seen a record inflow of nearly one million mainly Syrian refugees, crises in Greece and Ukraine and terror attacks in Paris, his counterparts were in little mood for compromise.

"If it is legitimate to listen to the British prime minister, it is unacceptable to revise founding European commitments," French president

Hollande told reporters as he arrived in Brussels.

European Council President Donald Tusk added that "some parts of the British proposal seem unacceptable," while European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker urged Cameron to come up with alternatives.

Cameron has broad support for his goals of greater protection of non-eurozone members, for an exemption from the EU's goal of "ever closer union" and for greater economic competitiveness.

But the rest of his counterparts, with the exception of Ireland and Denmark, oppose his demand for a four-year limit before EU migrants working in Britain can claim benefits such as social housing or child



Men work at a makeshift oil refinery site in Marchmarin town, southern countryside of Idlib, Syria on Wednesday. The owner says that he gets the crude oil from Islamic State-controlled areas in Deir al-Zor province and Iraq. Finance ministers from the UN Security Council yesterday met to adopt a wide-ranging resolution aimed at ramping up sanctions against the Islamic State group and cutting off its revenue flows. PHOTO: REUTERS

# 2015 likely to be hottest ever: report

AFP, Miami

The globe shattered yet another heat record in November, continuing a warming trend that is all but certain to make 2015 the hottest in modern history, US government scientists said yesterday.

Last month was the warmest November in 136 years and marked seven months in a row of record-breaking temperatures, said the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in its monthly climate report.

The November temperature across global land and ocean surfaces was 1.75 degrees Fahrenheit (0.97 degrees Celsius) above the 20th century average.

That means 2015 is poised to overtake 2014 as the most scorching year in contemporary times. Scientists say the trend is likely a result of human-driven climate change, whereby the burning of fossil fuels spews greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and traps heat.

# UK REPORT ON MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD 'Group's membership an indicator of extremism'

AFP, London

A British government review into Egypt's outlawed Muslim Brotherhood published on Thursday concluded that membership of or links to the political group should be considered a possible indicator of extremism but that it should not be banned.

The long-delayed review into the organisation was first commissioned in April 2014 by Prime Minister David Cameron with a remit to examine whether the group put British national security at risk.

"Parts of the Muslim Brotherhood have a highly ambiguous relationship with violent extremism. Both as an ideology and as a network it has been a rite of passage for some individuals and groups who have gone on to engage in violence and terrorism," Cameron said in a statement, describing the group as "deliberately opaque, and habitually secretive".

"The main findings of the review support the conclusion that membership of, association with, or influence by the Muslim Brotherhood should be considered as a possible indicator of extremism."

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi launched the toughest crackdown on Islamists in Egypt's modern history after

toppling President Mohamed Mursi of the Brotherhood in 2013.

Sisi classifies the Brotherhood as a terrorist group, but on a visit to Britain in November he said it could again play a role in public life if Egyptians wanted it to return.

The Brotherhood, the Middle East's oldest Islamist movement and long Egypt's main political opposition, says it is committed to peaceful activism designed to reverse what it calls a military coup in 2013.

Cameron said Muslim Brotherhood-associated and influenced groups had sometimes characterised Britain as fundamentally hostile to Muslim faith and identity and expressed support for attacks conducted by Palestinian Islamist group Hamas.

Cameron said the government would keep under review the views and activities of Muslim Brotherhood associates in Britain and whether the group met the legal test for proscription as a terrorist organisation.

Britain will also continue to refuse visas to members and associates the group who have made extremist comments, he said, and intensify its scrutiny of the views and activities Muslim Brotherhood members, associates and affiliates promote overseas.



# Teen punches Spanish PM in face

AFP, Madrid

Spain's Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy suffered a scare Wednesday when a 17-year-old youth punched him in the face during a campaign appearance in his northwestern fiefdom of Galicia, breaking his glasses.

A source in his ruling conservative Popular Party, who refused to be named, said the 60-year-old conservative Spanish leader was walking through the city of Pontevedra on the latest stop of his push for re-election in Sunday polls when the incident happened.

A police source, who also refused to be named, said the alleged aggressor was a 17-year-old and had been detained.

A video of the incident shows the youth punching the prime minister hard on the left side of his face before being wrestled to the ground.

The incident comes at an eventful time for the electoral campaign, marked by a debate of rare ferocity on Monday, which saw the usually calm Rajoy slam his main rival Pedro Sanchez of the opposition Socialists as "a miserable wretch" when he questioned his integrity. Sanchez wanted to know why the premier had not resigned over corruption allegations that have swirled since he took office in 2011.

# Trudeau seeks papal apology over church abuses on natives

AFP, Ottawa

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Wednesday he would ask Pope Francis to formally apologize for more than a century of abuses at church-run boarding schools set up to assimilate Canada's indigenous peoples.

A papal apology was among 94 recommendations presented this week to Ottawa by a truth and reconciliation commission that heard testimony about the "cultural genocide" from nearly 7,000 former students.

Speaking to reporters in Ottawa, Trudeau said: "We saw Pope Francis offer apologies to indigenous communities in South America in this regard."

"I'm certainly intending to work with the Catholic Church, including with the Holy See, to move forward on implement-



ing that recommendation to ask him directly to engage with this issue, yes," he said.

Since his election in 2013, Francis has apologized on behalf of the Church to sex abuse survivors, for the persecution of protestants in northern Italy, and for "offenses" committed against native Americas during the

16th-19th century colonial period.

In Canada, starting in 1874, 150,000 Indian, Inuit and Metis children in Canada were forcibly enrolled in 139 boarding schools run by Christian churches -- including the Catholic Church -- on behalf of the federal government in an effort to integrate them into society.

Many survivors alleged abuse by headmasters and teachers, who stripped them of their culture and language. At least 3,200 students never returned home.

## ANNOUNCEMENT Written Test for the post of Junior Officer (Cash)

The written test for the post of Junior Officer (Cash) will be held on **Friday, 01 January 2016, 03:00 p.m. to 05:00 p.m.** (02 hours). Details of the test will be available in the Admit Card.

The candidates are requested to download and print their Admit Cards for the written test from the Bank's website:

[www.pubalibangla.com/career.asp](http://www.pubalibangla.com/career.asp)  
Admit Cards will be available at the website only for the short-listed candidates.



**PUBALI BANK LIMITED**  
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**জাতীয় এসএমই ব্যবসায় পরিকল্পনা প্রতিযোগিতা**  
প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আত্মহীদের নিকট হতে নিখারিত ফরমে আবেদন আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।  
আবেদন জমা দেয়ার শেষ তারিখ ২০ ডিসেম্বর ২০১৫

- শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা-ন্যূনতম এসএসসি পাস।
- এসএমই ম্যানুস্ক্রিপ্টকারিং অথবা সার্ভিস সেক্টরের প্রচলিত, অপ্রচলিত এবং সৃজনশীল ব্যবসায়িক ধারণা।
- সম্ভাবনাময় এসএমই উদ্যোক্তা এবং বিদ্যমান এসএমই উদ্যোক্তা প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবে।

পুরস্কার  
১ম - ৩ লক্ষ টাকা  
২য় - ২ লক্ষ টাকা  
৩য় - ১ লক্ষ টাকা

প্রতিযোগিতার নিয়মাবলী এবং আবেদনপত্র এসএমই ফাউন্ডেশনের কার্যালয় অথবা গুয়েন পোর্টালে (<http://bpc.smef.org.bd>) পাওয়া যাবে। অনলাইনেও আবেদন করা যাবে।  
এসএমই ফাউন্ডেশন, ৪ পাহাড়পা, কারওয়ান বাজার, ঢাকা-১২১৫  
ফোন: ৮১৪ ২৯৪৩, ৯১০ ৪১২৪, ০১৮১৯৪৭৬৫৪২, ০১৭২৪১৬৬৭২৭  
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