

# NEWSIN brief

## IS blamed for Yemen old care home attack

Yemeni authorities have blamed the Islamic State group for an attack on an elderly care home run by missionaries that killed 16 people. Gunmen stormed the refuge operated by Missionaries of Charity on Friday, killing a Yemeni guard before tying up and shooting 15 other employees, officials said. 4 foreign nuns working as nurses were among those killed.

## Philippines seizes North Korean ship

The Philippines yesterday said it had impounded a North Korean vessel in response to tough new United Nations sanctions introduced in response to Pyongyang's recent nuclear and ballistic missile tests. The 6,830-tonne cargo ship Jin Teng will not be allowed to leave Subic port where it had been docked for three days and its crew will be deported, officials said. It was the first reported case of the sanctions -- the toughest to date, which were adopted late Wednesday by the UN Council -- being enforced.

## Rs 5 lakh for cutting Kanhaiya's tongue!

The BJP Yuva Morcha leader, who had announced a reward of Rs 5 lakh for cutting off JNU Students union leader Kanhaiya Kumar's tongue, was yesterday expelled from primary membership of the party for six years. Kuldeep Varshney had on Friday announced the prize money for cutting off the tongue of Kanhaiya Kumar for speaking against the BJP and Narendra Modi ever since he was released on bail. Kumar who was arrested on February 12 on sedition charges was released



## 'DARK DAYS' IN TURKEY

These pictures were taken yesterday during clashes between protesters and Turkish riot police, who used plastic bullets, water cannon and tear gas to disperse crowds protesting the government decision to take control of Zaman daily newspaper, in Istanbul. An Istanbul court on Friday ordered into administration the popular Turkish daily newspaper that is sharply critical of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, amid growing alarm over freedom of expression in the country. Story on page 11.

PHOTO: AFP



## Afghan Taliban reject peace talks

The Taliban yesterday refused to resume long-stalled peace talks with the Afghan government, reiterating their preconditions for holding dialogue, a statement said. "We want to repeat our stance once again that until the occupation of foreign troops ends, until Taliban names are removed from international blacklists and until our detainees are released, talks will yield no results," it said. The statement comes as direct face-to-face talks between the militant group and the Kabul government were expected to start in Islamabad this week. "We unequivocally state that the esteemed leader of Islamic Emirate (Taliban) has not authorised anyone to participate in this meeting and neither has the Leadership Council of Islamic Emirate decided to partake in it," the statement added. The announcement is a blow to efforts by Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and the United States to restart negotiations aimed at ending the Taliban's long and bloody insurgency in Afghanistan. Delegates from the four countries met in Kabul late February for a fourth round of talks aimed at reviving the nascent peace process, which stalled last summer. The quartet had called for a direct dialogue between the Taliban and Kabul by this week, a deadline that analysts called "completely unrealistic".

## Frontrunners look to extend leads

Five more states goes to polls; Trump accuses rivals of 'jealousy', 'hatred'

Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Hillary Clinton each look to strengthen their front-runner status when five states hold presidential nominating races on Saturday, as Trump tries to weather a barrage of blistering attacks from his party's establishment. Trump, the controversial New York billionaire who has opened a substantial lead in delegates over his presidential rivals, will be vying to rack up more wins in Republican contests in Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana and Maine. The states together account for just 155 delegates. Since winning seven of 11 contests on Super Tuesday, Trump has come under withering fire from a Republican establishment worried he will lead the party to a resounding defeat in November's elections. Trump, who refused to attend a key Republican event on Friday, accused his rivals and the establishment wing of the Republican Party of "jealousy" and "hatred". On the Democratic side, voters in Louisiana, Kansas and

Nebraska will weigh in yesterday on the race between Clinton, the former secretary of state, and Bernie Sanders, a US senator from Vermont. Polls show Clinton with a big lead in Louisiana. Sanders leads in Kansas and Nebraska. The three states have a total of 109 delegates at stake. In another development, former neurosurgeon Ben Carson has officially dropped out of the 2016 presidential race. Meanwhile, Trump abruptly backtracked Friday on vows to torture terror suspects and kill their families, saying he would not order the US military to break international laws if elected president. Trump's new position stands in contrast to remarks he made at a Republican debate less than 24 hours earlier, when he doubled down on previous pledges that, if elected, he would do "a hell of a lot worse" than waterboarding and said he had "no problem" with the targeting of terror suspects' families. In another blow to the him, members of Anonymous hacked his voicemail. The 2012 messages appear to show leading figures in the US media showering him with praise, compliments, and thanks for his financial support.

### BATTLE FOR US PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION

Trump takes U-turn on torture, targeted killings		
Anonymous hacks the GOP frontrunner's voicemails		
Ben Carson drops out of race		



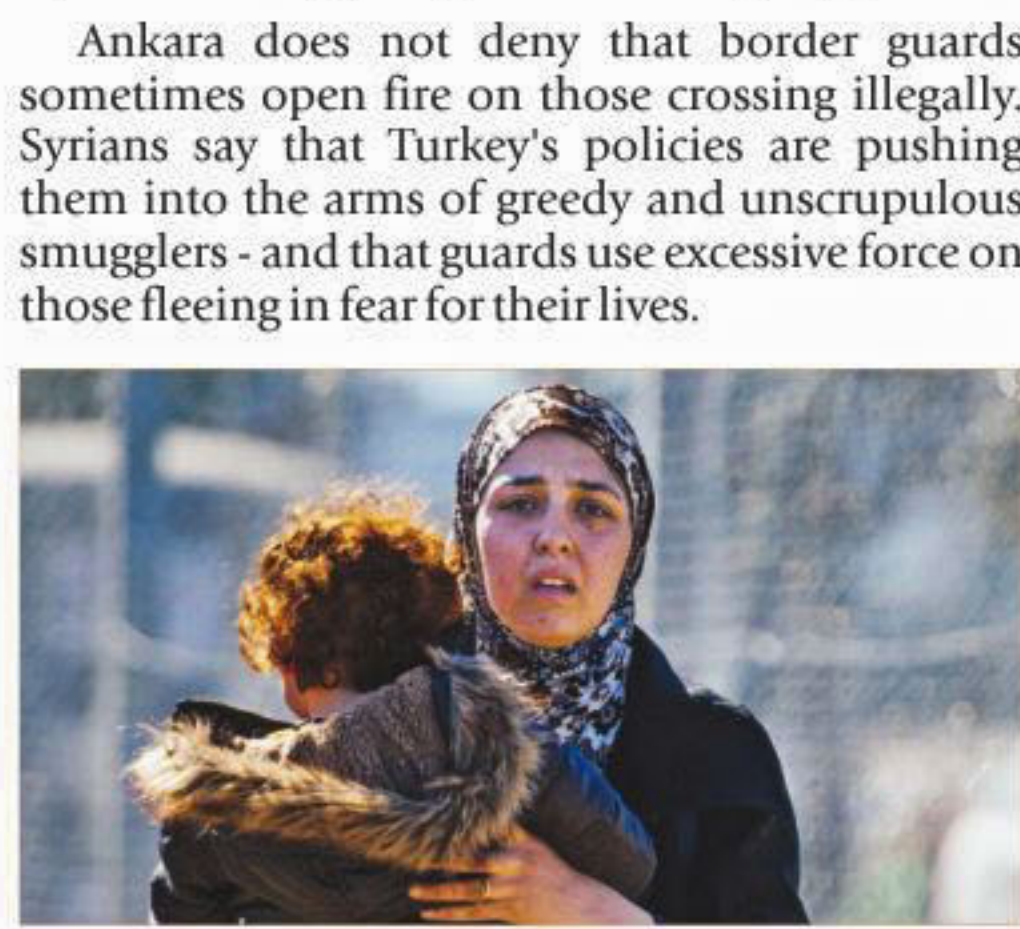
## Brazil's Lula defiant after detention

Brazil's ex-president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva vowed to battle his opponents in the streets in a defiant speech late Friday, hours after being briefly detained as part of a probe into a massive corruption scheme. Wearing a red shirt with his leftist Worker's Party yellow star on his chest, Lula gave an emotional speech to supporters where the charisma and feistiness that characterized his 2003-2010 presidency were on full display. "If they want to defeat me, they will have to face me in the streets of this country!" he told hundreds of supporters at a Sao Paulo rally. Lula, 70, even shed tears when he talked about how he lifted millions of Brazilians out of poverty during his two terms in office. Earlier in the day agents took Lula to a police station for questioning, raided his Sao Paulo home, the offices of the Lula Institute, and homes of family members and associates. Prosecutors said Lula was targeted as part of the Operation Car Wash investigation into a sprawling embezzlement and bribery conspiracy centered on the state oil giant Petrobras. Lula was not arrested, but held for questioning over alleged "favours" received from corrupt construction companies implicated in a kickback scheme, prosecutors said.

# Greetings with bullets, beatings

Report says Turkish guards 'pushing Syrian refugees into the arms of smugglers'

Turkish border guards are routinely attacking Syrians attempting to cross illegally into Turkey, refugees and campaigners have claimed. Families who fled the recent fighting in Aleppo told The Independent that officers had opened fire as they tried to reach Turkey with the help of smugglers. Others spoke of heavy beatings for those caught after attempting to slip across. Turkey has cracked down on its border security amid heavy pressure from the US to limit the transit of jihadist fighters seeking to join Isis. At the same time, the European Union has urged Ankara to stem the flow of refugees setting off towards Europe in dinghies from Turkey's western coast. As EU leaders prepare for a key summit with Turkey on Monday, aimed at preventing a repeat of last summer's influx, they face warnings that they must also encourage Turkey to grant safe passage to those trying to escape a war zone. Turkey insists that it maintains an "open door" policy towards Syrians, but human rights groups say that, for the past year, only those with serious or urgent medical conditions have been allowed to cross.



Aliya Radwan, a grandmother from Aleppo, was cowering from air strikes in a neighbour's basement when she decided that she had to leave. She knew that she and her family would not be allowed into Turkey at the Bab al-Salama crossing, 25 miles to the north. She had friends among the tens of thousands from Aleppo province who had already

flocked to the border but were sleeping in the open after being barred from entering Turkey. Instead, she turned to a smuggler. He took her family to a crossing at the town of Khirbet al-Jawz in neighbouring Idlib province. On their first attempt to cross on a dark, rainy night last month, they were forced to retreat in terror after border guards opened fire. They managed to sneak through undetected on a second attempt. Others were not so lucky. A young widow who fled heavy bombardment in Aleppo two months ago, who asked to be named only as Fatima, said that she saw border guards shoot a young girl making the same journey. "She didn't speak Turkish so didn't understand when they shouted 'Get away!'" she recalled. "The guards opened fire." She did not know whether the girl had lived or died. Amnesty International reported last month that hospitals in Azaz, a town near the Turkish border, were receiving two civilians a day who had been shot while attempting such crossings. It said that, in one case, a child aged 10 died after being shot in the head.

## Calais refugee children 'being raped in camp'

Teenage boys are being raped in the Calais Jungle, aid workers have claimed, amid concerns over the lack of child protection measures in place in the refugee camp -- and the risks of abuse facing thousands of displaced children across the continent. Medical volunteers helping those camped outside the French town told The Independent they have treated seven boys aged between 14 and 16 in the past six months who claimed to have been raped. They all had injuries consistent with these claims. In four cases, the boys required surgery. Only one attended hospital, however, with the others refusing treatment for fear of repercussions or through shame at having been abused. The Independent has spoken to a GMC-registered doctor to whom the volunteers reported the incidents. He confirmed knowledge of the cases. Europol, the EU's law enforcement agency, has also raised concerns that unaccompanied refugee children across the continent are at high risk of sexual exploitation. In January, a senior representative of Europol estimated that 10,000 unaccompanied children had gone missing within Europe. Volunteers in the Calais camp have spoken out about the lack of procedure in reporting serious cases of sexual abuse. They add that the French government's refusal to classify the camp as a humanitarian crisis is causing major child protection issues.

# Marshalls to open battle at UN court

The tiny Marshall Islands will tomorrow seek to convince the UN's highest court to take up a lawsuit against India, Pakistan and Britain which they accuse of failing to halt the nuclear arms race. Lawyers representing the small Pacific island nation will launch the opening salvos in a David-versus-Goliath battle in which the International Court of Justice is to examine whether it is competent to hear lawsuits against India and Pakistan. A third hearing against Britain, scheduled for Wednesday, will be devoted to "preliminary objections" raised by London. In 2014, the Marshall Islands -- a Pacific Ocean territory with 72,000 people -- accused nine countries of "not fulfilling their obligations with respect to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament." They included China, Britain,

### NUCLEAR ARMS RACE



A nuclear dome is pictured in the Marshall Island. PHOTO: AFP

countries such as India and Pakistan. But the court only admitted three cases brought against Britain, India and Pakistan because they already recognised the ICJ's authority. The Marshall Islands decided to sue the world's nuclear heavyweights as "it has a particular awareness of the dire consequences of nuclear weapons," it said. Between 1946 and 1958 the United States conducted 67 nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands, Majuro's representatives said in papers filed in court. In March 2014, the Marshall Islands marked 60 years since the devastating hydrogen bomb test at Bikini Atoll, that vapourised an island and exposed thousands in the surrounding area to radioactive fallout. The 15-megaton test on March 1, 1954, was part of the intense Cold War nuclear arms race and 1,000 times more powerful than the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

## China 2016 military budget to rise 7.6pc

China will raise its defence spending by 7.6 percent this year, a budget report to the country's Communist-controlled parliament showed yesterday, a smaller increase than past years as it seeks a more efficient military. It was the "lowest defence budget increase in six years", the official news agency Xinhua said, adding it came "in the wake of rising economic headwinds and last year's massive drawdown of service people". China's total declared spending of 954 billion (\$146 billion) remains far below the \$580.3 billion requested by the Pentagon for this fiscal year. In 2015, the defence budget was increased by 10.1 percent.

# Zika caught 'killing' brain cells

Scientists find link between Zika and foetal brain damage

Scientists on Friday said they had found the first evidence of a biological link between the Zika virus sweeping Latin America and microcephaly, a severe deformation of the brain among newborns. Researchers have shown that Zika virus kills the type of tissue found in the developing brain. Laboratory tests found that the virus targeted key cells involved in brain development and then destroyed or disabled them, they said. It was able to destroy or disrupt the growth of neural progenitor cells, which build the brain and nervous system, in lab tests. The findings are the first concrete evidence of a link between the mosquito-borne virus and microcephaly, which until now had been circumstantial, said Guo-li Ming, a professor of neurology at The Johns Hopkins Institute for Cell Engineering, and

a co-leader of the research. There have been more than 4,800 confirmed and suspected cases of babies born with small brains - microcephaly - in Brazil. It is widely thought that the Zika outbreak is to blame, but this has not been scientifically confirmed. The team from the Johns Hopkins, Florida State and Emory universities infected a range of tissue samples with Zika virus for two hours and then analysed the samples three days later. The virus was able to infect up to 90% of neural progenitor cells in a sample leading to nearly a third of cells dying and the growth of the rest being disrupted. A similar effect in a developing brain could have devastating results. By itself, Zika is typically no more threatening than a bad cold or a mild case of the flu. Sometimes there are no symptoms at all.

