

NEWS IN brief

Kiev car bomb kills top journalist

BBC ONLINE

A car bomb explosion has killed a leading Belarusian journalist and Kremlin critic, Pavel Sheremet, in the Ukrainian capital Kiev. He hosted a morning news show on Radio Vesti and reported for Ukrayinska Pravda, a popular news website. Sheremet had lived in Kiev for five years, after quitting Russian TV because of alleged Kremlin pressure.

3 French troops killed in intel ops in Libya

AFP, Paris

Three French soldiers who were carrying out "dangerous intelligence operations" in Libya have been killed in a helicopter accident, President Francois Hollande said yesterday. The deaths provide the first confirmation that France has troops in the country where the Islamic State group has several bases.

5 killed as sea-plane hits China bridge

AFP, Shanghai

An amphibious plane crashed into a highway bridge on the edge of the Chinese commercial hub Shanghai yesterday, killing five people and injuring five more. The plane, owned by airline Joy General Aviation, was taking off on a flight to neighbouring Zhejiang province with 10 people on board including the crew, when it hit the bridge in Jinshan district shortly after midday, the Shanghai government said.

Italy rescues 3,200 migrants in Med

AFP, Rome

More than 3,200 migrants were rescued from the Mediterranean Tuesday in 25 operations, the Italian coastguard said. One person was found dead during the rescue efforts, said the coastguard yesterday, which coordinated the missions conducted by the Italian navy and coastguard, the EU's EUNAVFOR Med mission and NGOs such as MSE, Sea Watch and MOAS.



Syrian civilians are seen following a reported air strike by Syrian government forces on the rebel-held northwestern city of Idlib, yesterday. More than 280,000 people have been killed and millions displaced since Syria's civil war erupted with the brutal repression of anti-government protests in 2011.

PHOTO: AFP

BASTILLE DAY TERROR ATTACK

France extends emergency

Vows to step up attacks on IS

REUTERS, Paris

French lawmakers approved a six-month extension of emergency rule yesterday after last week's truck attack on holiday crowds in Nice, the third deadly assault in just 18 months for which Islamist militants have claimed responsibility.

President Francois Hollande's Socialist government, accused by political opponents of doing too little to avert the attack that killed 84 and hurt hundreds, also said it would step up strikes against Islamic State in its strongholds in Iraq and Syria.

A year from elections, Hollande is under intense pressure as opponents accuse his administration of police failings over the tragedy. A Tunisian man was able to drive a 19-tonne truck along a packed sea-front promenade, mowing down people in the Bastille Day crowd, before he was shot dead by police.

The extension of exceptional search-and-arrest powers for police was approved by 489 votes to 26 shortly before dawn in France's National Assembly, the lower house of parliament, but not without renewed calls for an inquest.

Emergency rule has been in place since attacks on Paris last November in which Islamist militants killed 130 people. Another 17 people were killed in January 2015 in attacks that began with the shooting of journalists working for Charlie Hebdo, a satirical weekly that had published cartoons mocking Islam.

US, coalition allies regroup after attacks

Meet in Washington to review strategy, progress

AGENCIES

With jihadist attacks proliferating around the world, the United States has reassembled its coalition partners for meetings Wednesday and Thursday to review a two-year-old war that has so far failed to eliminate the Islamic State group.

The militant group may have lost ground in Iraq and Syria, but in recent weeks it has claimed horrific attacks in Nice, Istanbul, Baghdad and Dhaka that have left hundreds dead and injured.

The attacks are "going to be a primary focus, obviously, of the discussions," Brett McGurk, President Barack Obama's special envoy to the anti-IS coalition, acknowledged.

For two days, US Secretary of State John Kerry and Defense Secretary Ashton Carter will meet with about 40 of their counterparts in Washington, including France's Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault and Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian.

Echoing French Prime Minister Manuel Valls' warning of more attacks ahead and more "innocents killed," McGurk also cautioned: "Nobody can say these attacks are going to stop."

"Unfortunately, I think we are going to see more of these," he said.

The problem, says Michael Weiss, an expert

at the Atlantic Council think tank, is that "at the territorial level ... ISIS is down but not out." ISIS and IS are an alternate acronym for the Islamic State group.

"It has lost its ability to back and hold large swaths of terrain but it has not lost its ability to wage... opportunistic attacks," he said.

French military intelligence estimates that about 100 foreigners continue to enter Syria from Turkey each week to join Islamic State, French daily Le Figaro reported yesterday.

France's foreign minister said on Sunday that questions needed to be asked on whether Turkey was a viable partner in the fight against Islamic State in Syria and would raise the issue in a coalition meeting in the Washington.

Washington maintains that since its peak in 2014 IS has lost nearly 50 percent of the Iraqi territory it conquered and between 20 and 30 percent of its Syrian strongholds.

Kerry just returned from Moscow where he reached an agreement with the Russians to cooperate more closely in an attempt to salvage a failing truce and focus on the jihadists.

But Kerry said the concrete measures adopted by Russia and the United States would not be disclosed to allow the "quiet business" of peacemaking to continue.

TURKEY ROUTE 100 jihadists a week still entering Syria

REUTERS, Paris

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France's foreign minister said on Sunday that questions needed to be asked on whether Turkey was a viable partner in the fight against Islamic State in Syria and would raise the issue in a coalition meeting in Washington this week.

"According to the Direction for Military Intelligence in Paris, each week, about 100 foreigners continue to cross Turkey into Syria to join Islamic State," Le Figaro reported.

The Syrian Human Rights Observatory on Tuesday said nearly 60 civilians, including children, were killed in coalition air strikes near an IS-held village in the province of Aleppo.

AMERICA'S CHOICE FOR THE NEXT PRESIDENT CLINTON AND TRUMP SHOWDOWN IN NOVEMBER



HILLARY CLINTON DEMOCRAT 68 YEARS OLD
From Chicago, born Hillary Rodham Clinton. Former secretary of state, former first lady, and the first female partner of her Arkansas law firm.

DONALD TRUMP REPUBLICAN 69 YEARS OLD
From Queens, New York. Billionaire real estate tycoon and former reality TV star.

<p>POLITICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Started her own formal political career as a Democratic senator in 2000, after working on health care reform plans as first lady. Strong support from women Democrats and minorities. 	<p>POLITICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considered on the right of mainstream Republicanism. Popular with grassroots conservatives, white working and middle classes.
<p>PROMISES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gradual reform of Wall Street Tighten gun laws Expand university scholarships Immigration reform to simplify citizenship for illegal migrants 	<p>PROMISES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wall on the Mexican border Deport millions of illegal immigrants To "stand up to China" "Make America great again"
<p>REPUTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torchbearer of American women, has talked of the need to address racism and economic disparities 	<p>REPUTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reputation for talking tough, "say-it-as-it-is" honesty, disdain for the "political class", controversial comments about women, Mexicans and Muslims

India criticises UNSC sanctions regimes at UN

Urges reforms

PTI, UNITED NATIONS

India has called for reform in the "subterranean universe" of the UN Security Council's sanctions regimes as it criticised the lack of transparency in their functioning, saying principles of "anonymity and unanimity" absolve individual members of accountability.

There "is the need for change of the processes followed in the subterranean universe of the Council's subsidiary bodies. The subterranean universe I refer to consists of 26 sanctions regimes acting on behalf of the Council, India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin said at a Security Council session.

He said the 26 sanctions regimes cumulatively take 1,000 decisions every year but rarely does the Chair of any of these bodies briefs Member States or the media about the proceedings after their meetings.

He questioned why efforts at transparency are not extended to the "subterranean universe, where more decisions are taken than in formal meetings or informal consultations".

"Why is it that we are blandly informed of positive decisions of this subterranean universe and never told about negative decisions when proposals are not acceded to," he said on Tuesday as he lamented that in the Council's sanctions regimes no explanations are given about how the members voted and what their positions are. He further stressed that in the sanctions regimes no rationale is given for accepting requests for listing nor do the applications that are rejected surface in the public space.

Previously, India has slammed the UN sanctions committee for taking a "selective approach" in tackling terrorism.

EU sets emission target for members

AFP, Brussels

The EU yesterday unveiled national targets for cutting greenhouse gases by 2030, placing the burden on richer northern countries including exit-bound Britain to help meet the bloc's UN goal.

The plans for the 28 EU member states put the onus on Sweden, Luxembourg, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Britain, France and Austria as the bloc seeks to meet its commitment to cut emissions by 40 percent over 1990 levels.

The EU set the 2030 target as its overall pledge in the UN's climate agreement, reached in Paris last December.

Under the targets, which are based on economic growth, powerhouse Germany and tiny Luxembourg must cut emissions by 40 percent over 2005 levels, while Finland and Denmark must cut emissions by 39 percent.

Britain and France are asked to cut emissions by 37 percent while Netherlands and Austria should cut by 36 percent.

In contrast, Bulgaria, the poorest state in the bloc, was given an emissions reductions target of zero percent, while Romania, Latvia, Croatia, Poland, Hungary and Lithuania are all set below 10 percent.



A Code Pink protestor's face is covered with the American flag as she is restrained during the Republican National Convention on Tuesday at Quicken Loans Arena in Cleveland, Ohio. The Republican Party formally nominated Donald Trump for president of the United States, capping a roller-coaster campaign that saw the billionaire tycoon defeat 16 White House rivals.

PHOTO: AFP

Syria rebels 'behead boy'

BBC ONLINE

Videos have emerged online that appear to show Syrian rebels taunting and then beheading a boy they say is a captured Palestinian pro-government fighter.

One video shows five men posing with the frightened child, who could be as young as 10, in the back of a truck. One of the men grips him by the hair.

The same man is later filmed apparently cutting the boy's head off. The incident is reported to have taken place in Handarat, north of Aleppo, where there has been heavy fighting.

The area is the location of the unofficial Palestinian refugee camp of Ein El Tal, which was home to some 7,000 people before they were displaced by armed groups in 2013.

the last remaining road out of rebel-held eastern half of Aleppo cut, trapping an estimated 300,000 people living there.

The footage of the boy, who some on social media identified as "Abdullah Issa", first appeared online on Tuesday morning. The men in the first video say he is a fighter from Liwa al-Quds, a Palestinian pro-government militia operating in the Aleppo area.

Enab Baladi, a pro-opposition news website, said the boy was captured in Handarat by members of a local rebel group, the Nour al-Din al-Zinki Movement.

It quoted Yasser Ibrahim Yousef, a member of the group's political bureau, as saying on Facebook that an independent judicial commission had been appointed to investigate the incident.



No official Brexit talks in 2016

Theresa May tells Merkel; Britain rules out EU presidency

BBC ONLINE

Theresa May has said the UK will not begin official negotiations on leaving the EU this year as she held talks with Germany's Angela Merkel.

Speaking in Berlin, the UK PM said securing a "sensible and orderly departure" from the EU would take time. But she insisted the UK would not "walk away" from Europe and wanted to retain the "closest economic links".

However, Merkel insisted that talks over the UK's exit from the European Union cannot begin until Article 50 is invoked.

At a joint press conference, May said the UK was in no rush to trigger the two year process of leaving the EU - telling reporters that although "this would not please everyone" it was right to hold off until the UK's "objectives were clear".

want to "get on with the job and deliver the best possible results for the people of the UK and Germany".

Merkel said she did not expect there



to be any formal negotiations at this stage and it was "understandable" the UK needed a period of time to prepare.

women had properly met as they seemed immediately at ease in each other's company and determined to build a personal relationship based on mutual trust.

The two leaders will have a working dinner later yesterday before May has talks with France's Francois Hollande today.

Ahead of the visit - May's first overseas trip as prime minister - Downing Street announced the UK was to relinquish its upcoming six-month presidency of the Council of the EU.

The UK had been scheduled to take up the presidency of the Council of the EU - which rotates on a six-monthly basis between the 28 EU countries, giving each the opportunity to shape the agenda - in the second half of 2017. The first time that May will face all 27 other EU leaders at the same time will be at October's European Council meeting.