

# NEWS IN brief

## 7 killed in Mogadishu restaurant attack

AFP, Mogadishu  
Seven people were killed in an attack by Shabaab jihadists on a popular beachfront restaurant in the Somali capital Mogadishu, city authorities said yesterday. Two gunmen were also killed. The al-Qaeda linked jihadists attacked the Banadir Beach Restaurant close to the city's Lido Beach, setting off a car bomb before exchanging fire with security forces.

## Israeli troops kill 'assailant' in WB

AFP, Jerusalem  
Israeli troops shot dead a suspected Palestinian assailant, who was running towards the forces, at the entrance to the West Bank village of Silwad yesterday, the army said. A wave of violence since October has killed 222 Palestinians, 34 Israelis, two Americans, an Eritrean and a Sudanese, according to an AFP tally.

## Communists agree truce in Philippines

AFP, Oslo  
The Philippine government and Communist guerrillas yesterday signed an indefinite ceasefire deal to facilitate peace talks aimed at ending one of Asia's longest-running insurgencies. The Communist Party of the Philippines launched a rebellion in 1968 that has so far claimed the lives of 30,000 people, according to official estimates.

## Bus plunges into Nepal river; 21 killed

AFP, Kathmandu  
A packed passenger bus plunged into a river early yesterday in central Nepal, killing 21 people, a senior local official said. Rescuers struggled to recover bodies after the bus plunged into the swelling Trishuli river in Chitwan district. The bus was heading to the tourist town of Pokhara from the southern district of Rautahat.



Vehicle of Turkey's main opposition Republican People's Party leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu (not seen) is guarded by security officers after an attack against his convoy in the northeastern city of Artvin, Turkey, on Thursday.

# 'My brother is gone'

## Children among dead in Syria barrel bomb attacks

CNN ONLINE  
A barrel bomb killed more than a dozen people, including children, in one of two deadly attacks Thursday in the Syrian city of Aleppo, the Aleppo Media Center (AMC) says.  
At least five children were among those killed in the rebel-held neighborhood Bab al-Nayrab it says.  
Several videos were posted online by the AMC following the airstrike. The harrowing footage includes two young boys covered in dust, desperately clinging to each other and crying after learning their brother had died.  
"My brother is gone," one sobs.  
Amnesty International says barrel bombs are a common tactic of the Syrian regime. The strikes come amid Russia's agreement to a 48-hour ceasefire and the United Nations' emphasis on a need for one.  
The group also reported eight people

were killed Thursday, including two children, when rebels fired mortar rounds into regime-held areas in western Aleppo.  
Activists posted videos of the barrel bomb attacks online. Men and women carry dead children covered with dust, sobbing and crying. In one of the videos, a man sits outside his demolished house, visibly upset. "Don't step over them," he says, referring to his family members. "I lost my five children, oh God."  
Another video posted by activists in Aleppo shows a woman speaking to her dead child.  
"Hassan, it's your mom," the mother says as she looks at the child whose eyes are still open.  
"He is my son ... he is gone," she screams. "My sons, your brother is dead, your brother is dead."  
She touches his face and closes his eyes.



# Kerry, Lavrov push to finalise co-op deal

## Evacuees leave besieged Daraya after deal to end siege

REUTERS, Geneva  
US Secretary of State John Kerry and Russia's Sergei Lavrov yesterday sought to finalise an agreement on fighting Islamist militants in Syria as the first evacuees left a besieged Damascus suburb under a plan which has aroused the UN's concern.  
A deal on fighting jihadists in Syria could help lead to an end to fighting between the army and its militia allies on one side and non-jihadist rebels opposed to President Bashar al-Assad. This could pave the way for talks on a political transition to end the five-year Syrian conflict.

sulted on the plan and UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura and UN humanitarian coordinator Stephen O'Brien, voiced deep concern about it yesterday.  
"It is imperative that people of Daraya are protected in any evacuation that takes place, and that this takes place voluntarily," de Mistura, who leads UN political and humanitarian efforts in Syria, said in a statement after holding talks with Kerry and Lavrov.  
Senior White House officials from the National Security Council (NSC) joined the talks between Kerry and Lavrov, which broke after four hours, but were set to resume later.

As Kerry and the Russian foreign minister met at a hotel on Lake Geneva, residents and insurgents began to leave the besieged Damascus suburb of Daraya where civilians have been trapped since 2012, Reuters witnesses said.  
Rebels and Syria's army agreed the plan on Thursday to evacuate all the 4,000 residents and some 700 insurgents from Daraya in the coming days, ending one of the longest stand-offs in the civil war.  
But the United Nations was not con-

When Kerry launched the Syrian cooperation talks in July during a visit to Moscow, the proposal involved Washington and Moscow sharing military intelligence to coordinate air strikes against Islamic State and grounding the Syrian air force to stop it from attacking moderate rebel groups.  
Kerry believes the plan is the best chance to limit fighting that is driving thousands of Syrians into exile in Europe and preventing humanitarian aid from reaching tens of thousands more.

# Italy to mourn its dead

## Quake toll hits 267; at least 387 hospitalised; PM declares emergency as aftershocks continue to rattle affected areas

AFP, Amatrice  
Italy yesterday declared a day of mourning for victims of a devastating earthquake as hopes of finding any more survivors dwindled and the confirmed death toll rose to 267.  
Flags will fly at half-mast across the country today to coincide with funerals for some of the victims.  
Immacolata Postiglione, head of the Civil Protection agency's emergency unit, said no new survivors had been found overnight in the remote mountain villages blitzed by Wednesday's powerful pre-dawn quake.  
At least 387 people have been hospitalised with injuries but no one has been pulled alive from the piles of collapsed masonry since Wednesday evening.  
"We will go on searching and digging until we are certain there is no one left," said Luigi D'Angelo, a local Civil Protection official.  
Valerio Checchi, an officer with a forestry police unit, said he expected rescuers to shortly start using bulldozers to clear the debris in a sign virtually

all hope of survivors has gone.  
"We will still use thermal devices that can detect the presence of human bodies."  
Prime Minister Matteo Renzi has declared a state of emergency for the regions affected by Wednesday's quake, which occurred in an area that straddles Umbria, Lazio and Marche.

Renzi also released an initial tranche of 50 million euros (\$56 million) in emergency aid.  
Some 2,100 people who spent the night in hastily-erected tented villages were shaken by a 4.8 magnitude aftershock just after 6:00 am yesterday morning.  
More than 900 aftershocks have rat-

ted the region since Wednesday's 6.0-6.2 magnitude first one triggered the collapse of hundreds of ill-prepared old buildings across dozens of tiny communities playing host to far more people than usual because of the summer holidays.  
Many of the survivors camping out in the tents were carrying plastic bags containing the handful of possessions -- clothes, ID documents, phones and wallets -- they had been able to grab before fleeing their homes in terror.  
Quake experts have estimated that the cost of the short-term rescue effort and mid-to longer-term reconstruction could exceed one billion euros (\$1.13 billion).  
At least eight foreigners were among the dead, according to media reports and updates from foreign ministries.  
British media, citing an official in Amatrice, said three Britons had died, including a 14-year-old boy.  
Renzi's government and local authorities are now facing questions as to why there had been so many deaths in a sparsely-populated area so soon after a 2009 earthquake in the nearby city of L'Aquila left 300 people dead.



# France's top court stalls burkini ban

## France's highest administrative court yesterday suspended a controversial ban on the burkini by a French Riviera town after it was challenged by rights groups.

AFP, Paris  
In a judgement expected to set a precedent, the State Council ruled that local authorities could only restrict individual liberties if wearing the Islamic swimsuit was a "proven risk" to public order.  
The judges said there was no such risk in the case before the court concerning Villeneuve-Loubet, one of around 30 towns to have introduced the bans.  
The French Council of the Muslim Faith (CFCM) hailed the ruling as a "victory for common sense".  
Police have fined Muslim women for wearing burkinis on beaches in several towns, including in the popular tourist resorts of Nice and Cannes, sparking controversy in France and abroad.  
The burkini bans have triggered a fierce debate about women's rights and the French state's strictly-guarded secularism.  
Amnesty International welcomed the ruling.  
"By overturning a discriminatory ban that is fuelled by and is fuelling prejudice and intolerance, today's decision has drawn an important line in the sand," Amnesty's Europe director John Dalhuisen said.  
"French authorities must now drop the pretence that these measures do anything to protect the rights of women," he said.



Women cover their faces with masks as haze shrouds Singapore's central business district yesterday. Acrid smog blanketed Singapore yesterday as the city-state was hit by the year's first major outbreak of haze, an annual crisis sparked by forest fires in neighbouring Indonesia.

# Indian dargah ordered to lift ban on women

## A centuries-old Islamic mausoleum was yesterday ordered to allow women to enter its inner sanctum, with an Indian court saying a ban violated their constitutional rights.

AFP, Mumbai  
The Haji Ali Dargah trust has barred women from the landmark mausoleum off the coast of Mumbai since 2012, insisting women near the tomb of a revered saint is "a grievous sin" in Islam.  
"Women can enter the inner sanctum of Haji Ali Dargah and the state government has to ensure their security and safety," said Justice V M Kanade of the Bombay High Court, giving the verdict.  
It comes amid an intensifying campaign by women in India to be allowed to enter Hindu temples, some of which also ban females from their inner sanctum.



# Bolivian deputy minister killed by miners

AFP, La Paz  
Bolivian miners kidnapped, tortured and beat to death a deputy minister who tried to negotiate with protesting workers on Thursday, in what the government condemned as a brutal murder.  
"All signs indicate that our deputy minister, Rodolfo Illanes, has been cowardly and brutally murdered," Interior Minister Carlos Romero told a press conference.  
Illanes, who has served as deputy interior minister since March, had gone to a highway blockade in the western highland town of Panduro in an attempt to mediate with miners after days of violent protests.  
The workers were demanding more mining concessions with less stringent environmental rules.  
"He was harassed, tortured... he was beaten to death according to the information we have," Defense Minister Reyni Ferreira said.  
Illanes had earlier told local media by telephone that "I am in very good health... safeguarded by peers, so people do not hurt me."  
But reports later came in that the 56-year-old former criminal lawyer was dead.  
"We saw the lifeless body of Deputy Minister Illanes," Moises Flores, director of a mining radio station, told a local radio outlet.  
President Evo Morales was "deeply shaken" upon receiving the news, Ferreira said on private television station Red Uno, before breaking down in tears.

# 'PLOT TO TOPPLE MALDIVES PRESIDENT' Nasheed meets exiled opposition groups

## Ex-president Mohamed Nasheed, who recently won asylum in Britain after being jailed by Yameen's government, was among several exiled opposition groups meeting in Colombo, two people in Nasheed's Maldivian Democratic Party said.

AFP, Colombo  
The Maldives' dissident former president met opposition groups in neighbouring Sri Lanka yesterday to hatch a plan to topple strongman president Abdulla Yameen, opposition sources told AFP.  
Ex-president Mohamed Nasheed, who recently won asylum in Britain after being jailed by Yameen's government, was among several exiled opposition groups meeting in Colombo, two people in Nasheed's Maldivian Democratic Party said.  
"The opposition leaders are meeting in Colombo to work out strategies to legally topple Yameen," one MDP member told AFP.  
The MDP is part of a new coalition opposed to Yameen, called the Maldives United Opposition (MUO), formed in London in June where Nasheed sought asylum while on

leave from prison for medical treatment.  
The Male-based news outlet Maldives Independent said Nasheed and two other seniors of the MUO arrived in Sri Lanka on Wednesday.  
"The website report is accurate," a person close to the MDP told AFP.  
There was no immediate comment from the Maldivian government, but the administration has consistently maintained there is a plot to oust the president.  
In June, Yameen's former deputy Ahmed Adeb was jailed for 15 years on a charge of plotting to assassinate the president -- part of a sweeping crackdown on opponents, most of whom are in jail or exile.  
The international community has mounted fierce criticism against what they say is Yameen's unlawful jailing of Nasheed and other opponents.



# Tone for race turns darker

## Trump exchanges angry charges of racism with democratic nominee; judge orders release of new Clinton emails

AGENCIES  
The tone of the US presidential campaign turned darker on Thursday, with Hillary Clinton skewering Donald Trump as a man who flirts with racism and paranoid ideas, while he in turn labeled her a racist whose family foundation was a "criminal enterprise."  
Speaking at a campaign event in Reno, Nevada, Clinton employed unusually tough language as she detailed a history of what she said were the Republican real estate mogul's discriminatory actions.  
He had been sued as a young developer for failing to rent to black and Latino tenants, and by black employees of his casinos, the Democratic presidential candidate said.  
The Republican nominee's recent choice of Steven Bannon, a firebrand conservative, as his new campaign chief showed Trump was embracing the extremist white nationalist stances of the so-called "alt-right" movement, she said.  
"A man with a long history of racial discrimination who

traffics in dark conspiracy theories drawn from the pages of supermarket tabloids and the far dark reaches of the internet should never run our government or command our military," Clinton said.  
Her speech came on a day when one poll showed her support reaching an important threshold -- backing from just over half of all respondents. The survey by Quinnipiac University gave her a 51 to 41 percent lead over Trump in a head-to-head race, reports AFP.  
Meanwhile, a US judge ordered the State Department on Thursday to release by Sept 13 any emails it finds between Hillary Clinton and the White House from the week of the 2012 attack in Benghazi, Libya, among the thousands of additional emails uncovered by federal investigators.  
The order came after the Federal Bureau of Investigation gave the department a disc earlier this month containing 14,900 emails to and from Clinton and other documents it said it had recovered that she did not return to the government, reports Reuters.  
Spokesmen for Clinton did not respond to requests for comment.

### US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

