



# 'Now I can die in peace'

### Mamata hails SC verdict for Singur's farmers

TNN, New Delhi

West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee, who first came to power riding the wave of the protests against the Singur land deal, said yesterday that she can die in peace after the Supreme Court quashed the land acquisition.

"I had dreamt of this SC verdict for so long, for the people of Singur. Now I can die in peace. West Bengal is the final industrial destination, keep that in mind," said Banerjee.

The Supreme Court yesterday cancelled the deal through which the former Left government in West Bengal acquired 1,000 acres in Singur in 2006 to help Tata set up its Nano car manufacturing plant.

Upon hearing the verdict, farmers and locals erupted in joy and celebrated by throwing gulal on each other.

In 2006, in Singur, Banerjee and her Trinamool Congress (TMC) began agitating against Tata Motors acquiring land for the Nano project. The project faced massive opposition from displaced farmers, and, surprisingly, leftist activists also shared the platform with Banerjee's TMC.

Questions were also raised about the Left government's allegedly forcible acquisition, made under the colonial Land Acquisition Act of 1894. So strong were Banerjee's protests and hunger strikes that in 2008, Tata finally dropped the project.

The Supreme Court has asked the West Bengal government to undertake a survey to return the land to the original owners within 10 weeks.

# Brazil Senate ousts president

### Rousseff decries 'coup', vows comeback; Temer set to be new president

AFP, Brasilia

Brazil's Dilma Rousseff was stripped of the country's presidency yesterday in a Senate impeachment vote ending 13 years of leftist rule in Latin America's biggest economy.

Rousseff, 68, was convicted by 61 of the 81 senators of illegally manipulating the national budget. The vote, passing the needed two-thirds majority, meant she was immediately removed from office.

However, in a surprise twist, a separate vote to bar Rousseff from holding any public office for eight years failed to pass, meaning she could in theory re-enter political life.

In a statement from the Alvorada presidential palace on the outskirts of the capital Brasilia, Rousseff, from the leftist Workers' Party, called her forced exit a "coup."

"They decided to interrupt the mandate of a president who had committed no crime. They have convicted an innocent person and carried out a parliamentary coup," she said.

Cheers -- and cries of disappointment -- erupted in the blue-carpeted, circular Senate chamber as the impeachment verdict flashed up on the electronic voting screen.

Pro-impeachment senators burst into a rendering of the national anthem, some waving Brazilian flags, while leftist allies

of Rousseff, who back her claims of being victim of a right-wing coup, stood stony-faced.

Rousseff's vice president turned bitter political enemy, Michel Temer, was to be sworn in as her replacement at 4:00 pm (1900 GMT).

Temer, a veteran center-right politician, was then to leave for a G20 summit in China.

Rousseff, Brazil's first woman president, stood accused of taking illegal state loans to

reflected nationwide anger at her management of a country suffering double-digit unemployment and inflation.

The once mighty Workers' Party, meanwhile, has struggled to stage more than small rallies.

Temer, who was in an uncomfortable partnership with Rousseff before finally splitting, will be president until the next scheduled elections in late 2018.

The 75-year-old, known more as a backroom wheeler-dealer than street politician, took over in an interim role after Rousseff's initial suspension in May.

He immediately named a new government with an agenda of shifting Brazil to the right after more than a decade of leftist rule that saw 29 million people lifted from poverty, but became bogged down in corruption and the economic slump.

Temer has earned plaudits from investors. It remains uncertain whether he will have voters' support to push through the painful austerity reforms he promises.

About 50 leftist demonstrators gathered outside the presidential palace to show their support for Rousseff. "We are protesting against the coup and fighting for democracy," said 61-year-old farmer Orlando Ribeiro.

In the center of the capital, extra security and the closing of avenues near the Senate caused massive traffic jams. Police said they were preparing for large protests later in the day.



patch budget holes in 2014, masking the country's problems as it slid into its deepest recession in decades.

She told the Senate during a marathon 14-hour session on Monday that she is innocent and that abuse of the impeachment process put Brazil's democracy, restored in 1985 after a two-decades-long military dictatorship, at risk.

However, huge anti-Rousseff street demonstrations over the last year have

# DEATH OF 'JIHADI' TACTICIAN

# A major blow to IS

REUTERS, Beirut

The US air strike believed to have killed Abu Mohammad al-Adnani has deprived Islamic State of the architect of its attacks on the West, as it faces the loss of swaths of its heartlands.

One of the last survivors of the al-Qaeda militants who originally formed Islamic State last decade in Iraq, including its self-appointed caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, Adnani had risen to become one of its most influential leaders.

Not only did Adnani orchestrate Islamic State's propaganda effort, an undertaking at the heart of its quest to lay waste modern nation states, but he also served as one of its principle military planners.

If his death is confirmed, those skills will be hard to replace, even in a group as resilient as Islamic State, after a series of territorial losses and killings of top leaders.

In recent months Islamic State's losses in Iraq and Syria have mounted. Fallujah has fallen in the west and Iraqi forces have captured key approaches to Mosul.

Meanwhile, advances by a US-backed coalition in Syria have all but cut Islamic State off from the Turkish border, after the loss of the key town of Manbij, and started to press into its Euphrates valley heartland.

These advances have all but cut off Islamic State from its last foothold on the Turkish border, its link to new foreign recruits, while a steady push from the north has brought its enemies to within 30km of its Syrian capital Raqqa.

The losses have pushed it to adopt a strategy of attacks overseas. Adnani was the man behind that policy, demonstrating an ideological and tactical flexibility that allowed the group first to capitalise on its seizure of

land, and then to adapt as it was forced to retreat.

In doing so, Islamic State has made a switch in emphasis from its dreams of unifying all Muslims under a single, militant caliphate, to an older jihadist strategy of striking terror into its enemies by attacking them in their own countries.

But it has done this partly by harnessing shock tactics and social media to inspire and guide attacks by radicalised amateurs, rather than rely solely upon the highly trained but cumbersome militant cells of an earlier era. This, in part, was Adnani's legacy.

Adnani's presence in the Aleppo country side may reflect its strategic and symbolic importance to Islamic State.

But Islamic State's interest in the Aleppo countryside is more than that: just 30km northwest of al-Bab, where Adnani was reportedly killed in an airstrike after arriving to tour the battlefield, is the village of Dabiq.

A few streets surrounded by fields, it will be the site, says Islamic prophecy, of a final battle between Muslims and infidels that will herald the apocalypse.

So important is this event in Islamic State propaganda, of which Adnani was the chief, that Dabiq was the name chosen for its online magazine that sought to inspire new recruits to its militant cause and instruct them in the ways of global jihad.

Hisham al-Hashimi, a Baghdad-based security analyst that advises the Iraqi government on IS affairs, said: "As a military target, Adnani is less important than (ex war minister Omar) al-Shishani... (killed earlier this year in Iraq). His death is mainly a blow to their morale, he is the one who inspires the fighters to join in Syria."



Abu Mohammad al-Adnani



Myanmar's State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, President Htin Kyaw pose with ethnic leaders after the opening ceremony of the 21st Century Panglong Conference in Naypyitaw, Myanmar, yesterday. Peace talks between Myanmar's government and warring ethnic minorities kicked off yesterday in a bid to end decades of conflicts that have claimed thousands of lives and kept the country mired in poverty.

# IS LEADERS KILLED IN IRAQ, SYRIA

US-led coalition air strikes have killed several senior figures in the Islamic State group since April in a heavy blow to the jihadist organisation. Here is a short list of departed warlords:

- "OMAR THE CHECHEN"**  
On July 13, Amaq announced the death of senior IS commander Omar al-Shishani, whose nom de guerre means Omar the Chechen, near Mosul in northern Iraq. The Pentagon confirmed that coalition aircraft had targeted the IS leader, but not that he had been killed.
- IS ANBAR CHIEF ABU WAHIB**  
On May 6, another airstrike killed Abu Wahib, "military emir" of IS for the vast western Iraqi province of Anbar, near the town of Rutba. Abu Wahib, a former al-Qaeda militant and three other IS jihadists died when their vehicle was hit, and Pentagon spokesman Cook said he was considered "a significant leader in ISIL leadership overall, not just in Anbar province".
- ABD AR-RAHMAN MUSTAFA AL-QADULI**  
On March 25, US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter announced that Abd ar-Rahman Mustafa al-Qaduli, believed to be number two in the IS leadership, had been "eliminated" during a US operation in Syria. Carter also referred to Qaduli as Haji Imam.
- AL-NUSRA SPOKESMAN**  
On April 3, Al-Nusra Front spokesman Abu Firas al-Suri, also known as Radwane Nammous, died when US planes attacked a training camp in the northwestern Syrian province of Idlib. In late July, the group announced it was breaking ties with al-Qaeda and renaming itself Fateh al-Sham Front.

# Turkey denies truce with Kurds

### Russia questions UN report on use of chemical weapons

AFP, Istanbul

Turkey said Wednesday a truce with Kurdish-led forces in northern Syria was "out of the question", denying a US claim the two sides had agreed to hold fire a week into Turkey's cross-border offensive.

In an unprecedented operation, Turkey has been deploying tanks and troops in Syria to clear the border area of Islamic State (IS) jihadists and halt the westward advance of a US-backed Kurdish militia, which Ankara sees as a terrorist group.

The assault on the Kurdish-led forces has sparked international concern and Washington had said on Tuesday that the two sides had agreed to a ceasefire.

Yesterday, Russia added its voice, with the foreign affairs ministry calling on Turkey to avoid strikes in Syria on opposition and ethnic groups fighting Islamic State, including Syrian Kurds.

But Ankara dismissed this claim.

Presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin said a truce was "out of the question".

"They will remain our target unless they retreat east of the Euphrates," he said, repeating Turkey's demand that the Kurdish People's Protection Units

Ankara's bombardments of their positions appeared to have eased, with no reports of any such strikes since Monday.

Meanwhile, Iran, a key backer of President Bashar al-Assad's regime, urged Turkey to quickly wrap up its campaign, calling it a violation of Syrian sovereignty.

In United Nations, Russia on Tuesday questioned the findings of a UN-led investigation that blamed the Syrian regime for chemical attacks, saying they were not conclusive enough to trigger sanctions.

Britain and France called for UN sanctions after the investigative panel found that President Bashar al-Assad's forces had carried out at least two chemical attacks, one in 2014 and one in 2015.

The report also found that Islamic State jihadists had used mustard gas in an attack on the town of Marea in northern Aleppo province in August 2015.



**WAR IN SYRIA**

(YPG) retreat to the northeast.

Prime Minister Binali Yildirim yesterday said the operation would continue "until terror elements are completely neutralised and threats to our border, soil and citizens are over."

# US resumes passenger flights to Cuba

REUTERS, Santa Clara

The first scheduled commercial passenger flight from the United States to Cuba in more than half a century landed yesterday, opening another chapter in the Obama administration's efforts to improve ties and increase trade and travel with the former Cold War foe.

A JetBlue Airways Corp passenger jet arrived from Fort Lauderdale, Florida in the central Cuban city of Santa Clara. US Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx and journalists were aboard the 150-seat plane.

US Secretary of State John Kerry noted in a Twitter message that the flight took place just over a year after the raising of the flag at the reopened US embassy in Havana. He called it "another step forward."

Cuba and the United States began normalizing relations in December 2014 after 18 months of secret talks and have since restored full diplomatic ties.

The countries had been hostile for more than five decades, since Fidel Castro ousted US-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista in a 1959 revolution that steered the island on a communist course and made it a close ally of the Soviet Union.

Until Wednesday, passenger air links between Cuba and the United States were by chartered flights.

# Trump to meet Mexico leader

### The surprise move comes ahead of his key immigration speech

AFP, Mexico City

Donald Trump was all set to meet with President Enrique Pena Nieto in Mexico yesterday amid a firestorm of criticism from Mexicans irate over the Republican White House hopeful's caustic tirades belittling their country.

The tough-talking billionaire's meeting with Pena Nieto was expected to begin around 1900 GMT at Los Pinos, the presidential residence.

Local media said Trump would fly by helicopter to Los Pinos for the meeting and would later make a statement to the press.

The closed-door meeting takes place just hours before Trump delivers a highly-anticipated speech on immigration, and as debate about his headline policies -- including his call for building a border wall and having Mexico pay for it -- reaches fever pitch.

Pena Nieto has categorically rejected the idea of his country paying for a wall, and has gone so far as to compare the Republican candidate to Hitler and Mussolini.

Trump's campaign director Kellyanne Conway said he and Pena Nieto would address immigration, along with drug smuggling and trade.

Pena Nieto also invited Hillary Clinton, but the former secretary of state's campaign has announced no plans for a visit.

Hardline immigration policies are a key plank of Trump's campaign. In recent weeks, he has expressed willingness to soften his hardline stance to a "fair and humane" policy ahead of November's election.

He is scheduled to deliver what is billed as a crucial speech Wednesday evening in Phoenix, Arizona, seen as an opportunity to clarify his policy.

# Israel approves 463 settlement homes

AFP, Jerusalem

Israeli authorities yesterday approved the construction of 463 homes for Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank, the watchdog Peace Now said. The approvals mostly involved new housing units, but a retroactive green light was also granted to 179 existing homes in the Ofarim settlement. The US expressed concern by Israel's announcement.

**3,000 migrants saved**

AFP, Rome

Rescuers saved 3,000 migrants in the waters off Libya on Tuesday as they tried desperately to reach Europe, a day after a record 6,500 people were rescued in the Mediterranean. After several weeks of relative calm in the stretch of Mediterranean between Italy and Libya, more than 1,100 people were rescued on Sunday and another 6,500 on Monday.

# Maldives issues arrest warrant for Nasheed

AFP, Colombo

The Maldives said yesterday an arrest warrant has been issued for ex-president Mohamed Nasheed for failing to return to the troubled archipelago to complete a jail sentence after receiving medical care in Britain.

Nasheed, the Maldives' first democratically elected president, won political asylum in Britain in May after being granted permission to travel there for treatment while serving the sentence for a terror-related offence.

Opposition sources said Nasheed has been meeting Maldives opposition groups in Sri Lanka in recent days to hatch a plan to topple President Abdulla Yameen.

Nasheed's Maldivian Democratic Party yesterday played down the chances of his being arrested abroad since he had already secured asylum.

# IS ATROCITIES IN SYRIA, IRAQ

# Thousands found buried in 72 mass graves: report

AGENCIES

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group has buried thousands of their victims in at least 72 mass grave across Iraq and Syria, according to exclusive interviews, photos and research conducted by the Associated Press news agency.

Amounting to the most comprehensive survey of IS massacre sites to date, AP obtained locations of 17 mass graves in Syria, including one with the bodies of hundreds of members of a single tribe all but exterminated when ISIL took over their region.

Of the 72 mass graves documented in the investigation, the smallest contained three bodies; the largest is believed to hold thousands, but no one knows for sure.

IS has made no attempt to hide its atrocities. In fact it boasted of them. But proving what United Nations officials and others have described as an ongoing genocide - and

prosecuting those behind it - will be complicated as the graves deteriorate.

In its own propaganda, IS made clear its intention to wipe out the Yazidi community.

The Yazidi faith, one of the region's oldest, has elements of Christianity and Islam but is distinct. In an issue of its online English-language magazine Dabiq, IS scolded Muslims for allowing the Yazidis to continue existing, calling their ancient religion a form of paganism.

Nearly all of the areas recaptured from ISIL control have unmasked new graves, many of which are covered with just a thin coating of earth.

"They don't even try to hide their crimes," said Sirwan Jalal, the director of Iraqi Kurdistan's agency in charge of mass graves.

"They are beheading them, shooting them, running them over in cars, all kinds of killing techniques, and they don't even try to hide it."



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US Secretary of State John Kerry meets with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi, yesterday. Kerry's motorcade was caught in two hours of traffic chaos when he arrived in the Indian capital on Monday night for the annual US-India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue that seeks to deepen the bond between the world's two largest democracies. He was also caught in a tailback yesterday due to incessant rain in New Delhi on the way to deliver a speech to students at the Indian Institute of Technology.

# Japan typhoon kills 9

AFP, Tokyo

Surging flood water and mud brought by a devastating typhoon killed nine people in an elderly care home in northern Japan, officials said yesterday. The bodies were discovered in a riverside care complex half buried in mud after Typhoon Lionrock tore through the region.