



Masked demonstrators shout pro-freedom slogans in front of a burning tyre during a protest in Srinagar, yesterday. Inset, An Indian policeman fires tear gas shells towards the demonstrators. Violence continued in Kashmir yesterday despite tensions between India and Pakistan seemed to cool down after days of war of words.



PHOTO: AFP

# Blastkills 34 at Syria wedding

AFP, Hasakeh  
A suicide bomber has struck a wedding in northeast Syria as the bride and groom were exchanging vows, killing 34 people and wounding dozens, the local Kurdish government said.  
The bomber blew himself up late Monday in the village of Tall Tawil in Hasakeh province where a Kurdish party official was getting married.  
The Islamic State (IS) jihadist group claimed the attack, saying that one of its fighters had fired on a gathering near Hasakeh city before blowing himself up, though it did not mention a wedding.  
Rows of seats in the hall that hosted the party were still covered in blood on Tuesday morning when an AFP photographer visited the scene.  
Broken tiles littered the floor and torn fabric hung from the ceiling. A thick layer of dust covered a sound mixer and keyboard.  
"As the bride and groom were exchanging their vows I saw a man wearing a thick black jacket pass beside me," a witness named Ahmad said. "I thought he looked strange and a few seconds later there was an enormous explosion."  
The local Kurdish administration said 34 people had been killed and around 90 wounded, among them women and children. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights gave a higher toll of 36 dead including 11 children.  
Both the groom and bride were safe, but the groom's father and brother were killed in the attack, a relative told AFP.  
The groom, Zaradesh Mustafa Fatimi, hails from a prominent family deeply involved in the autonomous administration run by Kurdish factions in Syria's north. The Observatory said he is also a member of the Syrian Democratic Forces, an Arab-Kurdish coalition battling IS in northern Syria.  
Hasakeh city is almost entirely held by Kurdish forces but Syria's regime still holds some districts.

# Limit veto powers at UNSC

## Urges UN rights boss, accuses Russia of war crimes amid raging violence

AGENCIES  
The United Nations human rights chief yesterday told Russia that air strikes on civilian targets in the Syrian city of Aleppo may amount to crimes against humanity which could be brought before the International Criminal Court as rebels claimed they had repelled a major army offensive in southern Aleppo.  
High Commissioner Zeid Ra'ad al Hussein said initiatives to resolve the situation in besieged, rebel-held eastern Aleppo should include proposals to limit the use of the veto by the permanent members of the UN Security Council.  
This would enable major powers to refer the matter to the International Criminal Court, a step previously blocked by Russia and China.  
In New York, Russian UN Ambassador Vitaly Churkin dismissed Zeid's proposal, telling reporters: "It's not his responsibility to discuss veto powers."  
The development came as nations spoke of rebuilding a peace process the United States broke off this week. US Secretary of State John Kerry suspended talks with Russia on Monday, accusing Moscow of failing to live up to its commitments to halt fighting and assure aid reached besieged communities. However, Kerry said peace efforts must carry on.  
Turkey, meanwhile, said it planned to make a proposal to Washington and Moscow to resurrect

a ceasefire that collapsed last month.  
But on the ground there was no sign of peace with potentially the biggest and most decisive battle of the five-and-a-half year war unfolding as pro-government forces sought to drive anti-Assad rebels from their last major urban stronghold.  
Assad's government, with Russian air support and Iranian ground forces, launched the assault

of 293 civilians in besieged east Aleppo as a result of air strikes and shelling, including 20 yesterday. It has documented 25 deaths in government-held west Aleppo from rebel shelling during the 15 days.  
Moscow said it had deployed the advanced S-300 anti-aircraft missile system to Syria for the first time to protect its base at Tartous, Russia's



**DEVELOPMENTS**

- Rebels fend off regime's Aleppo assault
- Kerry says US still in 'pursuit of peace' after scrapping talks with Russia
- Turkey offers to revive ceasefire
- Russia deploys S-300 air defence system to Syria

on Aleppo last month, a week into a ceasefire agreed by Washington and Moscow.  
Rebels yesterday said they inflicted losses on pro-government fighters after hours of clashes on the fringe of Sheikh Saed district, at the southern edge of the rebel-held eastern half of Aleppo city.  
In the 15 days since the collapse of the ceasefire, war monitor the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said it had documented the deaths

only sea base on the Mediterranean.  
In addition to operating a naval facility in Tartus, Russia runs an air base outside the Syrian coastal city of Latakia, which currently houses war planes used in Moscow's bombing campaign in support of long-time ally Bashar al-Assad.  
The Hmeimim air base already has an S-400 air defence system, the most modern in Russia's arsenal.

# EU parliament ratifies Paris climate accord

## Last hurdle cleared for deal to take effect

AFP, Strasbourg  
The landmark Paris climate pact was poised to enter into force globally this week after the European Parliament joined the world's top polluters in endorsing the deal to slow the planet's dangerous temperature rise.  
In a vote watched by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, the parliament voted overwhelmingly by 610 for, 38 against and 31 abstentions in favour of the EU's fast-track ratification of the deal sealed in Paris last December.  
That puts the European Union on track to hand over its ratification to the United Nations on Friday, which would then take the international community above the threshold needed for implementation.  
The Paris accord requires all countries to devise plans to achieve the goal of keeping the rise in temperatures within two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and strive for 1.5 C (2.7 F) if possible.  
The European Parliament, the bloc's only elected body, backed a decision by EU

environment ministers last Friday to fast-track approval of the deal, despite only seven out of 28 EU countries having themselves ratified it.  
Fears that China and the United States, the world's two biggest polluters, were leaving Europe behind on ratifying last year's historic deal pushed them into rushing through the ratification.  
To come into force the accord needs ratification from 55 countries, which must together account for at least 55 percent of the planet's greenhouse gas emissions, which are responsible for climate change.  
With a decision in the last few days by India, the third biggest emitter, a total of 62 countries have ratified the agreement to commit to take action to stem the planet's rising temperatures.  
They all account for 52 percent of the planet's greenhouse gas emissions, and EU ratification will bring it over 55 percent threshold by including the seven EU countries who have already approved



# NEWS IN brief

## Myanmar scraps junta law to silence dissent

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar yesterday scrapped a law used by the former military government to silence political activists, which threatened jail for anyone who endangered public morality or execution for damaging telephone lines. The Emergency Provisions Act, passed in 1950 after Myanmar won independence from Britain.

## Afghan forces flushing Taliban out of Kunduz

AFP, Kunduz

Fighting continued on the outskirts of Kunduz yesterday as some frightened residents fled the city a day after the Taliban launched an hours-long assault that was repelled by Afghan forces backed by Nato. Interior ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said at least 30 Taliban insurgents had been killed.

## J&K newspaper banned for 'inciting unrest'

AFP, New Delhi

Authorities in Indian Kashmir have banned a local newspaper, Kashmir Reader, they said was inciting violence in the region. Rights groups criticised the move, which comes weeks after local authorities briefly banned all newspapers from publishing and stopped internet services. Journalists marched to protest the move in Srinagar on Monday, calling it a violation of press freedom.

# 'You can go to hell'

## Duterte tells Obama, threatens to break ties with US

AGENCIES  
Firebrand Philippine leader Rodrigo Duterte told US President Barack Obama to "go to hell" yesterday, as he threatened to end his nation's decades-old alliance with the United States in favour of China and Russia.  
The fresh tirade came as the Philippines and the United States launched annual war games that Duterte had already warned may be the last of his presidency, in response to US criticism of his deadly war on crime.  
"I have lost my respect for America," Duterte said as he complained at length in two speeches about calls by the United States, the United Nations and the European Union to respect human rights.  
"Mr Obama, you can go to hell."  
Despite the tensions, about 2,000 American and Filipino troops are taking part in the eight-day war games, which will



be held partly in waters near the disputed areas of the South China Sea.  
Duterte also branded Americans "hypocrites" and warned there may come a time when he would completely break the two nations' alliance, which includes a mutual defence pact, reports AFP.  
"Eventually I might in my term, break up with America. I would rather go to Russia or to China. Even if we do not agree with their ideology, they have respect for the people. Respect is important," he said.  
Meanwhile, the US State Department spokesman said yesterday Duterte's remarks seem at odds with the warm relationship between the Philippine and US people, reports Reuters.  
Duterte told Filipinos yesterday that they could not count on the United States, the Philippines' former colonial ruler. "Don't believe in those Americans. they will not fight to die for us," he said.



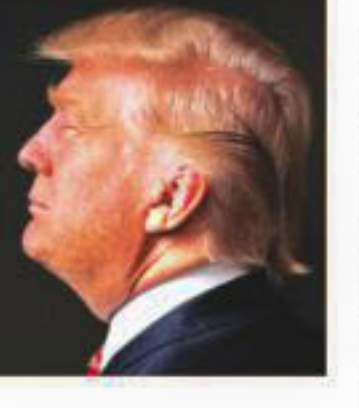
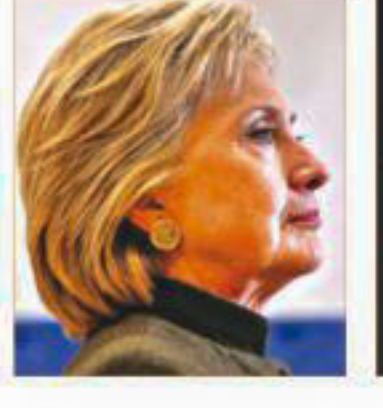
Refugees and migrants walk towards Hungarian border, in Belgrade, Serbia, yesterday in a desperate bid to enter the European Union. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban yesterday proposed changing the constitution to ban the large-scale resettlement of migrants, after voters overwhelmingly backed his rejection of an EU refugee quota plan in a referendum.

# Woes mount for Trump

## Authorities clamp down on his charitable foundation

AFP, Washington  
Donald Trump's presidential hopes suffered a punishing new setback Monday as authorities clamped down on his charitable foundation, while Hillary Clinton seized the offensive to brand him an unscrupulous businessman.  
With just five weeks to go before the November 8 election, Trump is seeking to climb out of one of the darkest periods of his White House campaign as his vice presidential pick Mike Pence was set to go toe to toe against Democratic Senator Tim Kaine late yesterday for their only debate of the campaign.  
Already weakened by damaging revelations about his taxes, the real estate billionaire was hit with an order by New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman that the Donald J Trump foundation must "cease and desist from soliciting contributions" in New York.  
The notice informed the charity that it had engaged in fundraising activities not permitted under the law because it had not been registered with the state authorities.  
With Team Trump on the defensive after leaked documents suggested he may have paid no income tax for two decades, his Democratic rival rounded on him as a

business bully who cares little for his fellow countrymen.  
"While millions of American families, including mine and yours, were working hard paying our fair share, it seems he was contributing nothing to our nation. Imagine that," a fired up Clinton said in Toledo, Ohio.  
"He has been 'dissing' America in this whole campaign," she charged, riding high on a surge in polling carried out after the bruising first presidential debate. The pair face off in their second showdown on Sunday.  
Farmville, a town of 8,000 nestled in the heart of central Virginia, was set to get a rare spell in the limelight last night when US vice presidential candidates Republican Mike Pence and Democrat Tim Kaine face off at Longwood University in their only debate of the general election campaign.  
Pence, 57, the governor of Indiana, was expected to face tough questions about Trump's taxes and views on women, which have dominated the news for the past week.  
Kaine, 58, a senator from Virginia, is a former governor of the state and was mayor of Richmond, the state capital. He will likely tout Clinton's experience and hammer away at Trump's policies as favoring the wealthy.



# Assange vows major leaks on US election

AFP, Berlin  
WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange yesterday vowed to publish new "significant" documents related to the US presidential elections ahead of the November 8 vote, as the online leaking platform celebrated its 10th birthday in defiant mood.  
Taking aim at critics accusing him and his organisation of manipulation, Assange pledged he would not be muzzled as he sought to raise "an army" of supporters to join in the defence of WikiLeaks.  
"We hope to be publishing every week for the next 10 weeks. We have on schedule... all the US election related documents to come out before November 8," Assange, wearing a black T-shirt bearing the word "Truth", told journalists via webcast from the Ecuadoran embassy in London where he has been holed up since 2012.  
He refused to reveal if the US-vote related documents would hurt Democrat candidate Hillary Clinton or target her Republican rival Donald Trump.  
But the white-haired WikiLeaks founder described the material as "significant" with "a

lot of fascinating angles". "Do they show interesting features on power factions and how they operate? Yes they do," he said.  
Ten years after it was founded, WikiLeaks has faced growing charges that it is manipulated by politicians -- either by recycling documents provided by Moscow, or by allegedly serving the interests of Trump in the US presidential election race.  
And Assange himself took refuge in the Ecuadoran embassy to avoid extradition to Sweden where he is accused of raping a woman while she was asleep.  
The 45-year-old has come under fresh pressure after WikiLeaks published some 20,000 internal emails on the eve of the US Democratic Party convention that forced top party officials to quit.  
Assange charged that WikiLeaks was now the target of a witch hunt orchestrated in particular by Clinton, likening it to the repression of American communists in the 1950s driven by then senator Joseph McCarthy. But he said he would not back down.



# POST-COUP PURGE

## Turkey sacks over 12,000 police officers

AFP, Ankara  
Turkey yesterday suspended more than 12,000 police officers over alleged links to Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen, accused of masterminding the failed July coup, in the latest move under the controversial state of emergency.  
Of the 12,801 suspended from duty as part of the investigation into the coup attempt, 2,523 were police chiefs, the police headquarters said in a statement. In total, Turkey has suspended around 270,000 cops.  
The action was taken over suspected links to the Gulen movement which Turkey blames for the failed putsch on July 15.