

NEWS IN brief

12 killed in Shabaab attacks in Kenya

AFP, Nairobi
A bomb blast at a guest-house in northeast Kenya killed at least 12 people yesterday, in an attack claimed by Shabaab militants. Also yesterday, a Shabaab suicide bomber attacked an African Union military base housing Djiboutian soldiers in the central Somali city of Beledweyne. It is not known how many were

Blast at Old Delhi kills 1; 5 injured

TNN, New Delhi
One person was killed and five others injured in an explosion at Naya Bazar near Chandni Chowk in Delhi yesterday morning. Initial investigations suggest that the blast could be due to a cracker burst. A lot of explosive materials, used in crackers, were found at the site of explosion, officers told TOI.

EU extends Schengen border controls

AFP, Strasbourg
The EU yesterday moved to prolong border controls in the passport-free Schengen area for three months, which was imposed last year to cope with last year's massive migrant influx. The EU had said it wanted to restore full functioning with no border controls across the Schengen area by the end of the year.

Gunmen kill two Saudi police

AFP, Riyadh
Unidentified gunmen killed two Saudi policemen in the mainly Shia eastern city of Dammam early on Tuesday, authorities in the region said. There have been shootings of security forces in the Eastern Province in the past by Shia militants angry at what they say is repression of their community.



An internally displaced girl looks on as she and her father flee fighting near Hassan Sham, east of Mosul, Iraq, yesterday. UN aid agencies fear a humanitarian crisis in few days as it fears a mass exodus after fighting intensifies. PHOTO: REUTERS

Probe Rakhine atrocities: UN

REUTERS, Yangon
UN human rights experts have called on Myanmar to investigate allegations that security forces have killed unarmed civilians, burned villages and made arbitrary arrests in a Muslim-majority region where a crackdown has followed attacks on border police.
Aid agencies say up to 15,000 people, believed to be mostly Rohingya Muslims, have been displaced since armed men launched coordinated attacks on three posts along the northwestern border with Bangladesh on Oct 9.
The government, which is led by Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, has characterised the response of security forces as a carefully targeted sweep of northern Rakhine State's Maungdaw Township in search of the perpetrators.
Officials say security forces have killed 30 "attackers" and detained 53 suspects while searching for 400 suspected Rohingya militants, who seized dozens of weapons from border police.
The UN envoy on human rights in Myanmar, Yanghee Lee, said she had received "repeated allegations of arbitrary arrests as well as extrajudicial killings occurring within the context of the security operations conducted by the authorities in search of the alleged attackers."
"What troubles me most is the lack of access for a proper assessment of the true picture of the situation there at the present moment," Lee said in a statement from Geneva on Monday.
Aid operation are also halted for the crackdown, he said.
Hundreds of Rohingya villagers are facing a second night hiding in rice fields without shelter, after the army on Sunday forcibly removed them from a village in a crackdown following attacks on border security forces.

UN REPORT ON REFUGEE CRISIS Med 3 times more deadly than 2015

REUTERS, Geneva
The death toll on the Mediterranean has nearly matched that of all last year, with more than 3,740 migrants and refugees having drowned on their way to Europe, and perilous winter months still to come, aid agencies said yesterday.
Smugglers are now sending thousands of people on flimsy inflatable rafts from Libya to Italy in mass embarkations, perhaps to lower their own risks of being caught, but also complicating the work of rescue teams, they said.
At least 3,740 people have perished so far, nearly matching the death toll of 3,771 for all of 2015 when three times as many people, more than one million, took to the seas, the United Nations refugee agency said.
"This is by far the worse we ever have seen in the Mediterranean," William Spindler, spokesman of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), told a news briefing. "You could say that the death rate has increased three-fold."
About 2,200 migrants were plucked to safety in the central Mediterranean in 21 rescue missions on Monday and 16 bodies were recovered, the Italian Coast Guard said.
"We were told by witnesses there may be many more. There may be other shipwrecks that occurred over the weekend that we're learning more about," IOM spokesman Joel Millman said.
One per every 47 migrants or refugees attempting the voyage between Libya and Italy is dying, the UNHCR's

Assault on Raqqa imminent

US defence secy says the offensive in Syria may 'overlap' Mosul operations

AGENCIES
The United States expects the campaigns against Islamic State in Mosul and Raqqa to overlap, U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter said on Tuesday, signalling that a push to start isolating the group's de facto capital in Syria may not be very far off.
Iraqi forces are already nine days into their U.S.-backed campaign to take the city of Mosul from Islamic State, fighting their way towards the city's outer limits in what could become the biggest military operation in Iraq in over a decade.
The campaign itself could last weeks or even months, allowing some leeway in timing.
"Yes, there will be overlap and that's part of our plan and we are prepared for that," Carter told a news conference in Paris after a gathering of 13 countries in the U.S.-led coalition fighting Islamic State.
He did not offer further specifics, but his words suggested that military moves against Islamic State's stronghold in Syria might not be far off.
French President Francois Hollande, addressing the meeting of defence ministers, warned the coalition needed to watch out for flows of Islamic State fighters from one besieged city to another.
"In these columns of people leaving Mosul will be hiding terrorists who will try to go further,

to Raqqa in particular," Hollande said, calling for greater intelligence sharing to identify them.
Carter yesterday said more than 35 Islamic State commanders were targeted by the coalition in the past 90 days, including many of the top leaders.
But the fight against the Jihadist has been

WAR ON ISLAMIC STATE

Turkey threatens ground ops against PKK in Iraq
Kurds in Syria says Ankara attacking them from capturing Raqqa

mired by infights among the coalition fighting to capture Mosul.
Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu yesterday said his country is ready to launch a ground operation in Iraq if it feels threatened by developments there.
Turkey will not tolerate the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militant group, which has waged a three-decade insurgency against the Turkish state

for greater Kurdish autonomy, using parts of northern Iraq as bases, Cavusoglu said.
He accused Iraq's central government in Baghdad of "tying itself to a terrorist organisation" and said Turkey would take whatever steps necessary to protect its soldiers stationed at the Bashiqa military camp, near the northern city of Mosul.
"If there is a threat to Turkey from Iraq, we will use all our resources and rights, including a ground operation," Cavusoglu said in an interview with the Kanal 24 TV station.
Largely Sunni Muslim Turkey and the Shia-dominated central government in Iraq are at loggerheads about the presence of Turkish troops at Bashiqa, and about Ankara's demand to take part in the US-backed Mosul operation. Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has said Baghdad does not want Turkey's help.
Turkey says it has a responsibility to protect ethnic Turkmen and Sunni Arabs in the area around Mosul, once part of the Ottoman empire.
Meanwhile, a Syrian Kurd leader in France on Tuesday accused Turkey of waging attacks on Kurdish forces trying to recapture Raqqa, the Islamic State group stronghold in Syria.
"With its artillery and aircraft, the Turkish army is taking advantage of the media and international community's focus on Mosul to



French riot police officer secures the area near a burning makeshift shelter set ablaze in protest against the dismantlement of the camp for migrants called the "Jungle" in Calais on the second day of their evacuation in France, yesterday. More than 3,100 migrants have been bussed out of the camp since authorities began a sweep on Monday, sending them to regions around the country to begin a months-long process for resettlement. Among them are more than 130 children. PHOTO: AFP

'Don't make us your dogs'

Duterte hits out at US again, heads to Japan

REUTERS, Manila
Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte lashed out anew at the United States yesterday and said it could forget a bilateral defence deal if he stayed in power long enough, in the latest jarring statement from Manila about the future of the alliance.
The fresh broadside from Duterte came as he was about to board a plane for an official visit to fellow US ally Japan, a big investor in the Philippines that is becoming nervous about its apparent pivot towards rival power China.
The volatile, crime-busting Duterte had on the eve of the visit softened his remarks last week about a "separation" from Washington, telling Japanese media he wasn't planning to change alliances and was only seeking to build trade and commerce with China.
But he pulled no punches yesterday when he said he hated having foreign troops in the Philippines and told the United States not to treat his country "like a dog with a leash".
Commenting on a visit to Manila on Monday by Daniel Russel, an Assistant Secretary of State, Duterte said Washington should forget about an Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) with the Philippines if he were to stay in charge longer.
"You have the EDCA, well forget it. If I stay here long enough," he said. "I do not want to see any military man of any other nation except the Filipino. That's the only thing I want."
He did not elaborate on what staying longer meant. In the Philippines, a president is allowed only one six-year term in office.
The remarks were another perplexing swing from Duterte, who last week announced in China his "separation" from the United States, before assuring that ties were not being severed and he was merely pursuing an independent foreign policy.
His latest swipe at Washington could rattle Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who wants to keep ties with the Philippines tight.



LEAK OF OFFICIAL DOCS
S Korea's Park makes public apology
AFP, Seoul
South Korean President Park Geun-Hye was forced into a public apology yesterday for the leak of official documents to a family associate involved in a growing corruption scandal.
"I deeply apologise to the people," Park said in a televised speech, before bowing deeply to the camera.
South Korean prosecutors are currently investigating Park's longtime friend Choi Soon-Sil over allegations that she used her relationship with the president to strong-arm conglomerates into multi-million dollar donations to two non-profit foundations.
Park had sought to distance herself from the case, but was brought into focus by a TV report on Monday that Choi had been given advance copies of presidential speeches and may have had a hand in revising some of them.
The report was based on 200 files on Choi's computer -- retrieved from her office after she left the country as the influence-peddling scandal broke.
Her present whereabouts are unknown.
Describing Choi as someone who helped her during "difficult times", Park admitted that she had sought Choi's opinion on her speeches and unspecified "PR materials" for her election campaign and after she took office in February 2013.

Iraqis are world's most generous people: study

REUTERS, London
Although torn by civil war, Iraq is the world's most generous country towards strangers in need, according to a new global index of charitable giving.
Eighty one percent of Iraqis reported helping someone they didn't know in the previous month, in a global poll commissioned by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF).
For the first time since CAF began the poll in 2010, more than half of people in 140 countries surveyed said they had helped strangers - with many of the most generous found in countries hit hard by disaster and war.
Despite suffering instability and violence, Iraq has twice been ranked top in terms of helping strangers. Libya, with its own internal conflict, was second on the list this year and Somalia, embroiled in civil war for 25 years, fourth.
"I think that the lesson here is societies are incredibly resilient and that large scale disasters tend to activate a collective humanitarian response," said Adam Pickering, international policy manager at CAF, which promotes charitable giving.
In terms of donations to charity, Myanmar held the top position, with nine out of ten surveyed saying had they given during the previous month. The United States ranked

Rivals storm key swing state Florida

Obama urges voters to reject the GOP candidate; Trumps dismisses 'phony polls'

AFP, Washington
White House rivals Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump set their sights on crucial battleground Florida yesterday, blitzing the diverse state as the clock ticks down on the tumultuous race for the US presidency.
With two weeks to go before the November 8 election, polls showed Democrat Clinton -- who is vying to be America's first female president -- dominating nationally and looking for a resounding mandate to govern the bitterly divided country.
Trump, his campaign wilting under a barrage of controversies, acknowledged that the White House will likely elude him if he doesn't win Florida and its 29 electoral votes.
"I think that's probably true," the Republican nominee said in a telephone interview with Fox News.



"I believe Florida is must-win. I think we're winning it, think we're winning it big," said the 70-year-old Manhattan real estate mogul.
Early voting began in Florida on Monday, an urgent reminder that candidates have little time left to make their case in the country's third most populous state, one with a wide mix of constituencies -- retirees, Latinos and Bible Belt whites.
No one has forgotten that the 2000 US presidential election turned on Florida, where a virtual tie was decided in favor of George W. Bush by the US Supreme Court.

RACE TO WHITE HOUSE

13 DAYS TO GO

Poll averages show that Clinton, the 68-year-old former secretary of state, is ahead in the state by 3.8 percentage points, and nationally by 5.1 points, according to RealClearPolitics.
She was to make a campaign appearance in the afternoon at a college in southern Broward County near Fort Lauderdale, before going on to a fundraiser in Miami.
Trump was first out of the blocks yesterday, taking aim at a sharp rise in health insurance premiums under President Barack Obama's signature health care reform. He

vowed to shut it down if elected.
At a Monday fundraiser in La Jolla, California, President Barack Obama said he wants an overwhelming Clinton victory in order to send the message that Americans reject Trump's divisive rhetoric.
"We want to win big," Obama said. "We don't just want to eke it out, particularly when the other guy's already started to gripe about how the game is rigged."
With his path to victory narrowing, Trump has railed against the "phony" polls and appealed to voters to turn out, calling it a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity" to reject the political elite.
"Make sure you get out and vote, or this whole thing, you know the movement that they're all talking about all over the world, it won't be