

# NEWS IN brief

## 11 killed, 59 hurt in Pak shipyard blast

At least 11 people were killed and 59 wounded yesterday when a gas cylinder exploded and started a fire inside an oil tanker being broken up for scrap in southern Pakistan, officials said. The accident happened at the Gadani shipbreaking yard in the southwestern province of Balochistan, some 50 kilometres (30 miles) west of Karachi.

## OIC chief quits

The world's largest pan-Islamic body, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, said its Saudi chief resigned Monday, days after infuriating Egypt over a remark that mocked President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. OIC Secretary-General Iyad Madani "has resigned for health reasons," the Jeddah-based organisation said in a statement.

## Venezuela rivals seek to ease political crisis

Venezuela's embattled government and opposition leaders agreed Monday to hold talks to defuse a growing political crisis, but mistrust lingers after an attempt to recall the president was scuttled. With the mediation of the Vatican and the Union of South American Nations, the two sides agreed after hours-long talks which ended before dawn on an agenda that includes a new meeting next month.

## Pak suspends channel over Indian content

The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) has suspended the licence of Nickelodeon channel for airing cartoons dubbed in Hindi language. Pemra has imposed a complete ban on airing Indian content on local television and FM radio channels.

# Surrender or die

## Warns Iraqi PM as forces enter IS-held Mosul for the first time

Iraqi prime minister has urged the Islamic State group to surrender as government troops fought their way into jihadist-held Mosul yesterday.

Haider al-Abadi warned the jihadists they would have no place to run. "We will close in on (IS) from every place," he said on state television, dressed in a camouflage uniform.

"They don't have an exit, they don't have an escape, they can only surrender -- they can die or they can surrender," Abadi said.

Just over two weeks into the massive offensive to retake Mosul -- IS's last major stronghold in Iraq -- the army said its forces had managed to push within city limits.

Troops had "entered the Judaidat Al-Mufti area, within the left bank of the city of Mosul," the Joint Operations Command said in a statement.

Mosul is split by the Tigris River, with the eastern half of the city known as the left bank. Judaidat al-Mufti is on the southeastern side of the city.

Elite Iraqi forces had also recaptured the key village of Gogjali and taken control of a television station building on the eastern edge of the city.

Fighters from the US-trained Counter-

Terrorism Service (CTS) had pushed into the area amid heavy fighting on the eastern front over the past two days.

"Now is the beginning of the true liberation of the city of Mosul," Staff General Taleb Sheghati al-Kenani, the commander of CTS, told Iraqiya



Displaced Iraqis sit at the back of a vehicle after escaping from an Islamic State controlled village near Mosul yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

state television from Gogjali. Backed by air and ground support from a US-led coalition, tens of thousands of Iraqi fighters are converging on Mosul.

Meanwhile, Turkish military has deployed tanks and artillery to southeastern districts near the Iraqi border, military sources said yesterday.

The 30-vehicle convoy left Ankara for Silopi, the sources told AFP, adding that it was now close to Adana province in southern Turkey.

Defence Minister Fikri Isik said yesterday's deployment was a part of Turkey's preparation for "important developments in the region", referring to Kurdish rebels inside the country and events in Iraq.

"Turkey is preparing in advance for whatever happens (and) this is one element of that," he said, quoted by the official news agency Anadolu.

Humanitarian organisations have been fighting against the clock to build up the capacity to handle the possible mass exodus from Mosul.

The United Nations says up to a million people could be displaced in the coming weeks. More than 17,900 people have already fled their homes since the operation began, according to the International Organization for Migration.

The UN said yesterday it had received more reports of IS fighters forcing thousands of civilians into Mosul, possibly to be used as human shields.

In the early hours of Monday, IS fighters "brought dozens of long trucks and mini-buses to Hamam al-Alil City, south of Mosul, in an attempt to forcibly transfer some 25,000 civilians towards locations in and around Mosul," the UN rights office said in a statement.

# Chance of Syria settlement slim

## Says Russia as talks delayed indefinitely

Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu yesterday accused the US-led coalition in Syria of failing to rein in hardline rebels, and said the chance of a political settlement was now remote.

He said the coalition was "putting spokes in the wheel" of Russia's military operation in the country and failing to "act in unison".

"As a result, the prospect of the start of a political settlement and a return of the Syrian people to peaceful life has been postponed indefinitely," he said at a televised meeting with top brass.

He said rebels were shooting "dozens of peaceful civilians" every day for attempting to use humanitarian corridors set up by Russia out of rebel-held eastern Aleppo, which so far have seen only a trickle of people leave.

"Is that really opposition you can come to an agreement with?" he said.

Moscow has been conducting a bombing campaign in Syria in support of long-time ally Bashar al-Assad since September 2015.

Russia has now ceased air strikes on eastern Aleppo for 16 days, Shoigu said, after criticism over a Russian-backed Syrian government assault that has killed hundreds of civilians and destroyed infrastructure including hospitals.

Defiantly hitting back at Western opposition to Russian warships using European ports en route to Syria, Shoigu called on Western countries to "decide who they are really fighting: terrorists or Russia".

# New blow to Pak PM

## SC orders probe against Sharif into Panama papers scandal; Imran Khan's PTI calls off capital 'lockdown'

In a setback for Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, the Pakistan's Supreme Court yesterday ordered a probe into the Panama papers scandal involving corruption allegations against the family of the beleaguered premier.

The larger five-member bench conducted the hearing in presence of several cabinet ministers, lawyers of petitioners, senior PTI leaders and media.

The apex court said it was ready to appoint a probe commission headed by a judge and armed with powers of the Supreme Court.

The court also ordered the government and petitioners to present their Terms of Reference (ToR) for the probe panel.

It will decide to harmonize the ToR if the parties could not come up with the agreed set of ToR. Before its adjournment till tomorrow, the court also expressed willingness to hold hearings on a daily basis.

Reacting to the court's ruling, Imran Khan said the planned anti-government rally will now be marked as a day of thanksgiving in Islamabad.

Addressing a press conference outside Bani Gala, Khan thanked those who were part of his struggle against corruption. "Go home and rest," Khan told supporters, "You have to return to Islamabad tomorrow to celebrate thanksgiving at Parade Ground."

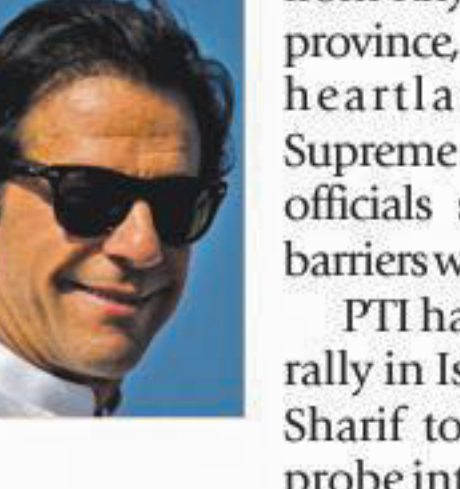
"I am elated that the investigation into Nawaz Sharif's (alleged corruption) will begin day after tomorrow."

Authorities have arrested scores of party supporters and shut a major motorway leading from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Khan's political heartland. After the Supreme Court decision, officials said the highway barriers would be cleared.

PTI had announced the rally in Islamabad to force Sharif to resign for a fair probe into the scandal.

According to the Panama Papers, three of Sharif's four children - Maryam, Hasan and Hussain were owners of offshore companies and "were owners or had the right to authorise transactions for several companies."

Sharif and his family have dismissed the allegations of money laundering and denied any wrongdoing but the opposition is demanding an independent probe.



# ELECTORAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

The Electoral College is the formal body that elects the president and vice president of the United States. The Founding Fathers established it in the Constitution as a compromise of sorts between having the president be elected by Congress or by a popular vote of the people. On Election Day, when US citizens cast their vote, they are actually voting for the electors chosen by the candidates' parties. Most states have a "winner-take-all" system that awards all electors to the winning candidate. Maine and Nebraska employ a type of proportional system, but since they only account for 9 electoral votes in total, this has not influenced any election. There are 538 electors that make up the

Electoral College and a majority of 270 is needed in order to win the Presidency. The allotment of electors for each state is the number of members of its Congressional Delegation: two for each senator and one for each Representative in the House (for example, New York State has 29 electors as there are 27 Representatives and two Senators). The District of Columbia, which has no representation in Congress, is awarded three electors, the same number as the state with the least electoral votes. The selection of Electors is actually a two-step process. First each candidates' party selects its slate of electors for each state. These can be state elected officials or party leaders, and are usually

selected for their loyalty to the party. Electors cast their votes, one for President the other for Vice President, in December and those votes are then counted in Congress in early January. If an elector votes for a candidate other than the one they are pledged to, they are known as "Faithless Electors". In the history of US elections there have been only a handful and have never decided an election. There have been four elections where a candidate has won the Electoral College vote but lost the popular vote. The most recent was in 2000 when George W. Bush lost the popular vote to Al Gore but won the election thanks to the Electoral College (and the Supreme Court). INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

# Michelle in Clinton's Cabinet!

Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton has said she is open to having First Lady Michelle Obama in her Cabinet if she wins the November 8 polls. "She's made it pretty clear she wants to focus on important issues like girls' education around the world - she and I actually talked about it when we were together in Winston-Salem - and I want to be the best partner I can be for whenever she wants to do be involved in government again," Clinton told ExtraTV. "I think she wants to take a break from it, but if she ever wants to do anything like that, I would be the number-one person," Clinton said responding to a question on having the First Lady in her Cabinet.

# 'Russia tried to woo Trump to bring down US democracy'

Russia has spent the last five years trying to cultivate Donald Trump as an asset in a bid to undermine Western democracy, according to some extraordinary claims made by a veteran of the spying community. The allegation is the latest in a series of purported links between the Republican candidate and the Kremlin, which the FBI has been investigating in an ever-widening probe over the course of the summer. But the accusations came to a head this week, after Democrat Senate leader Harry Reid responded to a new probe into Hillary Clinton's emails by saying the FBI should go public with "explosive information" linking Trump to Russia. According to the news site Mother Jones, a former Western security official with decades of experience in Russian counterintelligence has handed the FBI a series of memos suggesting there was "an established exchange of information between the Trump campaign and the Kremlin of mutual benefit". The spy claimed, after consulting with Russian sources, that: "Russian regime has

been cultivating, supporting and assisting Trump for at least 5 years. Aim, endorsed by Putin, has been to encourage splits and divisions in western alliance." The memos also claim, according to Mother Jones, that the Trump campaign "accepted a regular flow of intelligence from the Kremlin", that Russia had enough information from Trump visits to Moscow to "blackmail" him, and that the Kremlin had been feeding him information about Clinton based on her own trips as Secretary of State. The FBI responded by asking for all the spy's information on Trump, and how he had obtained it, according to the site. It is not clear whether the spy's claims form part of a formal FBI investigation. But senior agency officials have told the New York Times there are aspects of Trump's alleged relationship with Russia that are still being looked into. Agency officials, again unnamed, told the Times the hacking represented Russia's desire to disrupt and undermine US elections generally, and Moscow's growing adeptness in cyber-attacks, rather than support for any one candidate.



Indian volunteers and officials carry a two and a half year-old child Pari into The Government Medical College Hospital in Jammu yesterday, after he was injured in cross-border shelling in the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir. Story on page 16. PHOTO: AFP

# 'Thank you, Weiner' Trump gloats on Clinton's woes

Donald Trump has "thanked" disgraced New York congressman Anthony Weiner and his for his part in bringing to light new emails potentially related to the FBI probe into Hillary Clinton's use of a private server during her time as Secretary of State. Weiner, 52, resigned from Congress after a sexting scandal in 2011 and is now under investigation for allegedly exchanging explicit messages with a 15-year-old girl. The FBI recently seized a laptop he shared with his estranged wife, Clinton aide Huma Abedin. The device reportedly contains some 650,000 emails, some of which may relate to the Clinton email investigation. Speaking on the stump in Michigan on Monday, Trump expressed confidence that the newly discovered messages would be "absolutely devastating" to his election rival, adding: "I think we hit the mother lode." At two campaign appearances in the Great Lake State, Trump suggested he was grateful to Abedin and Weiner for their involvement in the new controversy. "Thank you, Huma. Good job, Huma," the Republican nominee said in Grand Rapids. "Thank you, Anthony Weiner," he said in Warren, adding: "I've never liked you, but thank you!" Trump donated several thousand dollars to Weiner's congressional races in New York in 2007 and 2010. The property developer has spent the past few days trumpeting the email news, describing the investigation of Clinton's server as "bigger than Watergate," despite the FBI having disclosed no details regarding the new emails, including whether any of them came from Ms Clinton herself.

# Suu Kyi under pressure

## Tensions spike between her new govt and army; top diplomats to visit region

Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi faces mounting criticism for her government's handling of a crisis in Muslim-majority northern Rakhine State, where soldiers have blocked access for aid workers and are accused of raping and killing civilians.

Meanwhile, sources said senior diplomats from the United States, China, Britain and the European Union will this week visit the restive state, which has been cut off to aid workers and observers for more than three weeks.

The diplomats, and the top United Nations representative in Myanmar, will set off for Maungdaw on Wednesday, six people with direct knowledge of the matter told Reuters on Tuesday.

The military operation has sharpened the tension between Suu Kyi's six-month-old civilian administration and the army, which ruled the country for decades and retains key powers, including control of ministries responsible for security.

Exposing the lack of oversight of the armed forces by the government, military commanders have ignored requests

for information about alleged misconduct by soldiers for more than 10 days, according to a senior civilian official. Troops moved into northern Rakhine, near the frontier with Bangladesh, after militants killed nine border police in coordinated attacks on Oct 9. Since then, the government has said five soldiers and at least 33 insurgents have been killed in clashes with a group it believes has around 400 members drawn from the mostly stateless Rohingya Muslim minority. Residents and rights groups have reported killings, looting and sexual assaults committed by soldiers against civilians. While Myanmar's army-drafted constitution puts the military firmly in control of security matters, diplomats and aid workers say privately they are dismayed at Suu Kyi's lack of deeper involvement in the handling of the crisis. United Nations experts have publicly called for the government to investigate allegations of human rights abuses. Diplomats have also pressured the Myanmar government to allow humanitarian aid, including World Food Programme assistance and mobile clinics, to be restored.

### TORTURES, KILLINGS IN RAKHINE



# Photographer Modi

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi indulged in some wildlife photography after inaugurating the Jungle Safari park in Chhattisgarh's Naya Raipur yesterday.

Modi's pictures, in which he can be seen clicking images of tigers in the safari, have gone viral on social media. "One for the camera...at the Nandan Van Jungle Safari," Modi tweeted along with his images of photographing the big cats.

The Prime Minister can be seen taking a zoom-in shot of the tiger fearlessly, while the ferocious animal can be seen growling at him.

Earlier in the day, the Prime Minister inaugurated the Jungle Safari park developed in an area of 320-hectares in Naya Raipur, the upcoming capital of the state. Naya Raipur will see Modi launch the 'Saur Sujala Yojana', which aims to provide solar pumps to 51,000 farmers for irrigation in Chhattisgarh.

