



Police detain a protester from India's main opposition Congress party during a protest against the government's decision to withdraw 500 and 1000 Indian rupee banknotes from circulation in Kolkata, India, yesterday. The US supported India's move of demonetising 500 and 1000 currency notes, saying that it was an "important" and "necessary" step to address corruption.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## NEWS IN brief

### India signs \$750m deal for BAE howitzers

AFP, New Delhi

India has signed a \$750 million agreement with the United States to buy 145 howitzer artillery guns from BAE Systems, an official said yesterday, its first such deal in three decades. India, the world's number one defence importer, is updating its military capabilities with hardware worth tens of billions of dollars in the face of long-standing tensions with regional rivals China and Pakistan.



### Rahul Gandhi's Twitter account hacked

TNN, New Delhi

Less than a day after India's Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Twitter account was hacked, it was hacked again, this time along with the Twitter account of his Congress party. Here's what the Indian National Congress party's Twitter account said: Coming up is a full dump of inc.in congress emails, stay tuned for Christmas special. We have enough info to drop your party down to shreds.

### Ukraine launches missile near Crimea

AFP, Kiev

Ukraine yesterday unleashed a barrage of missile tests near Russian-annexed Crimea in a show of strength and defiance bound to irritate Moscow. The two-day military drills near the Black Sea peninsula are a first for the former Soviet republic and a sign that it is regaining assertiveness in the face of its arch-foe Russia.

## Trump praises Pak PM

Offers to help solve problems in an effusive phone call

REUTERS, Islamabad

The prime minister's office did not elaborate on the kind of problems Trump offered to solve. The statement also did not clarify why exactly Trump was impressed with Sharif.

Pakistan's sputtering economy has rebounded since Sharif was elected in 2013 and security has vastly improved amid greater efforts by the army to tackle militants such as the Pakistani Taliban.

But security remains a problem as Islamist groups continue to stage mass attacks and Islamic State radicals have sought to gain a foothold inside Pakistan.

Trump's office said the two leaders had a "productive conversation about how the United States and Pakistan will



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